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A GENERATION OF RELIGIOUS PROGRESS

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(ISSUED IN COMMEMORATION OF THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNION OF ETHICAL SOCIETIES)

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CHARLES T. GORHAM

EDITED BY

G. SPILLER

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PREFACE

THE World War, which has now been raging for well nigh two years, has made it painfully manifest that the religion of yesterday, with its implicit reliance on transcendental guidance and aid, is not the religion of to-day. Men neither hope to win the War, nor secure a permanent settlement, save as the result of indefatigable thought and effort, and if scarcely a voice can be heard which does not anathematize war and all its odious works, it is because the consciences of men, liberated from ancient trammels, have grown infinitely more sensitive. Supernaturalism, in other words, has become as nearly as possible an empty formula, while strenuous endeavour in the service of the moral ideal has acquired a sacred character.

The following chapters, contributed by notable writers who have a recognized claim to express an opinion on the themes they treat, abundantly substantiate what is baldly stated in the preceding paragraph. Sir Harry Johnston, Mr. Alfred W. Martin, Mr. William Archer, Miss Margaret McMillan, Mr. Joseph McCabe, Prof. J. S.

Mackenzie, Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe, and Mr. Charles T. Gorham, each within the field wherein they are authorities, and all in their characteristic and individualized manner, press home the moral with unmistakable emphasis.

It is this new and beneficent trend in mental evolution which the Ethical Movement champions. For this reason the central organization representing it in England, the Union of Ethical Societies, considered that in these soul-searing days it could not commemorate its coming-of-age more appropriately than by calling the attention of thoughtful men and women to the recent progress in religious outlook and practices. This it has done, confident that when the deeper meaning of the spiritual revolution we are witnessing and participating in is apprehended the corresponding duty will disengage itself.

Morality is by its very nature rational, and reason is in its essence ethical. Accordingly, it was in the fitness of things that the Rationalist Press Association should have evinced interest in this volume and have joined in placing it before the public.

May this little work reach a large circle of readers, stimulate wholesome discussion, and aid in paving the way for the undisputed reign of conscience and reason in the affairs of men!

PROLOGUE

"*In former times, when there were drought and famine in the land, men loaded the altars of the gods with gifts intended to placate their anger, and to induce them to send the wished-for rain. To-day, in famine-stricken India, what is it that the wisest rulers of the country are intent upon? They are studying how to supply on a stupendous scale artificial irrigation, how to increase the facilities of transportation, how to uplift the ignorant peasantry by education, so that they may be able to employ more effective methods of agriculture. In former times, when the plague passed over Europe, mowing down its millions, the churches were thronged with multitudes of worshippers who besieged the Almighty to withdraw the fearful scourge. To-day, when an invasion of the cholera threatens a country, the Kochs and Pasteurs are busy in their laboratories, seeking to discover the germs of the disease, and rigorous sanitation is everywhere applied to deprive those germs of the congenial soil in which they flourish.*

"*The conception of a Heavenly Father, interfering*

with the operations of Nature, arose when the teachings of natural science were unknown. These teachings have been fruitful of substantial results. The progress of mankind had been kept back for centuries by the disposition to expect, of the love and kindness of Providence, the benefits which, if obtainable at all, must be obtained by human effort. The progress of mankind has been incalculably advanced by the appeal to self-help, by the conviction that 'the gods help them who help themselves,' which, after all, is synonymous with saying that if we are to be saved we must save one another."

PROFESSOR FELIX ADLER,
in "The Religion of Duty."

CHAPTER I

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

BY SIR HARRY HAMILTON JOHNSTON,
G.C.M.G., K.C.B., D.SC.

RELIGION and Science, as fields of human inquiry and speculation, were one and the same thing in the long days during which the human intellect expanded from mere brute awe of the unknown into those marvellous soundings of the Universe and that exploration of the infinitely little which have made modern man into a demigod. There was no conflict between the two. Both of them arose from experiment and the hazardous jumpings of the human mind at conclusions based on homely parallels. Even the chimpanzi, even the baboon—even the pariah dog, led into speculation by his association with Man—has his moments of doubt and wonderment when the full moon rises red or golden behind the forest trees or the minarets and ascends to the zenith to flood the world with silver light. On nights of full moon in the forests of Equatorial Africa a traveller may hear the chimpanzis howling and shrieking and drumming with their fists on prone hollow trunks, which serve as primitive drums.

So with our remote human ancestors: when their human eye-sight—sharper, it may be, than that of the ape—explored the wonders of the night sky, the puzzling phases of the moon, the blazing constellations, the brilliant, moving planets and falling meteors; when, above

all, they heard the crashing thunder, saw the lightning first kill a huge tree and then, when dry, kindle it into a column of flame, and so release on earth that marvellous agent, fire; when they wandered far afield from the forests and realized their dependence on the rainfall for drinking water, for the up-springing of new forms of vegetable food, they began to conceive that the earth, the ground on which they lived and had their being, was not arched over by mere emptiness, but that there were Forces, evil and good, in the sky.

Then, again, they dwelt more and more on the mystery of death. This is felt by the apes, the baboons, and even the long-tailed monkeys. Already a passionate love of offspring and parent, of wife, and even young companions of both sexes, has arisen in the simian mind. Who that has had much to do with monkeys, baboons, and apes can doubt this? Their affections are nearly as strong as those of human savages, here and there approach the altruistic, and are not limited by sexual or parental feeling. They form communities which, however they may bicker among themselves, are united in their general comradeship against the outside world. These associations of apes and monkeys may be mutually hostile between clan and clan, and there may be occasional quarrels within the clan; but their tribal solidarity is what has enabled them to withstand the attacks of many a carnivorous beast, bird, or reptile, and ultimately to prevail against all the rest of vertebrate creation by culminating in the human genus.

Consequently, when a Pithecanthropos, an Eoanthropos, or a Neanderthalensis died, more or less grief and frequently some mystification was doubtless felt by the survivors in the family circle or the clan. As human characteristics became more marked and of a more modern type, an instinctive feeling grew up that the

cessation of bodily life and movement did not mean the cessation of individuality, the death of the mind, of the soul, as well as of the body. Whether that instinctive feeling was founded on actual fact we know no more to-day in the twentieth century A.C. than did our remotest human ancestors. We may hope—we may feel almost angrily—that it must be so, otherwise Man's existence on this planet seems a wasted effort. But if we are to be guided by the same reasoning that we apply to the ordering of our lives in all material questions—questions that affect the purse, the health, the safety of the person, the avoidance of pain or injury—we are forced for the present to be agnostics, though it is perfectly legitimate to hope some day for scientific proof of the survival of the Ego when the life of the human body comes to an end.

This increasing, if irrational, conviction of the survival of the soul, combined with the appreciation of visible or audible heavenly phenomena, brought about the birth of Religion, which in its search after the cause behind the effect was also Science. An old chief of a clan died perhaps at an unusually advanced age for the then average longevity. He had been so masterful a personality, was so looked up to by his wives, his many children and grandchildren, that the family and the clan could not believe death ended all. Or it might be that children sorrowing over the death of a loving mother, or a mother's passionate bewailing of an endearing and sprightly child, intuitively conceived a theory of continued life. In either case the body was put away in some hollow tree, in some excavation sheltered by a cave, under some cairn of stones on a high hill where it might be safe from the attacks of hyenas or human ghouls. With it were buried weapons, ornaments, and implements, and close by the grave were placed food and

drink. No very close reasoning followed. The wish was father to the thought. But early Man was loath to think that life had completely departed from the body even after death. The soul—conceived by him to be like the shadow or like the breath made visible on chilly mornings—might be detached from the body, but it hovered near, perhaps remained always in the vicinity of the skeleton. It might want sustenance, if only in a spiritual form; and gradually the tenderings of food and drink became merely emblematic; or logic carried men a step farther, and they actually burnt these sacrifices, turned them into vapour, into smoke, so that they might be assimilable by the spirit; broke the implements and weapons, so that they too might die and their soul be utilizable in the ghost world. At last, in the case of notabilities, the ghost grew into a local deity (I have traced out all these processes in actual savage Africa)—a deity of the big tree, of the dark cavern, of the mountain peak, the rushing stream, the still pool. Eventually the human origin of this local god was forgotten. Then came a fusion of the two elements of a belief in divinity: the venerated ancestor, the beloved parent, the hated enemy, ascended to the sky and was God. From earliest times of reasoning onwards there had been the Man in the Sky, an "old man" generally (and probably the earliest divinities were male in sex rather than female—indeed, religion arose in many ways as a deification of the strong man, the Father, the chieftain of the clan). Yet in some religions the clan god, or deified ancestor, and the God of the Sky have remained separate conceptions to this day. In the case of Yahveh (Jehovah), he has probably grown from a fusion of the two elements into the conventional God of present-day Jews, Christians, and Muhammadans. Brahma of the Hindus is no doubt a thinning-out of some Aryan sky-god; while, on the

other hand, most of the later Hindu divinities have arisen from the deification of actual potent personalities or the personifying of attributes or forces. Hercules, Odin, and most of the gods of Amerindian America were probably deified warriors.

But just as early man, in his conception of the world outside his own body and own clan, argued from human and homely examples that there must be a Man in the Sky of obviously human inconsistencies and disposition, who alternately sent the rain to a parched world and scared humanity by his fearful voice in the thunder; or slew right and left with the fiery sword of lightning (or, again, was beneficent with this same fiery sword in starting a bush fire which led to an enormous and glorious glut of roasted beasts, birds, and reptiles): so they further theorized that this big man in the sky, being after all only projected humanity, must have a wife, and from the divine union must spring children. Then, as Man on earth had enemies and rivals, so perhaps the god of the thunder and lightning was the bad god; and the deity of the rain or the sun the good god; while each again had his emissaries and armies. Thus the heavens were peopled. And then, by some alternate revulsion to loftier thoughts, God reigned alone in unapproachable majesty.

Similarly, the earth-, tree-, and water-spirits must be sexed. An adored wife or mother—for connubial and filial attachment is far greater among utter savages than is commonly supposed, and is observable among the higher apes—lived again as a local goddess; and the Mother god of the Universe might be the Earth itself, bride of the Sun. The Sun, perhaps after all, was a visible manifestation of God; though, for some reason not yet clear to us, the sun has been far less identified with visible divinity than might necessarily be supposed from the enormous part

that he plays in the fate of humanity, even in the reasoning of savages. When, however, our source of light and heat was deified, the moon was his elusive wife, and the planets were their children.

Once these ideas had been evolved in the mind of early Man he was liberal in his religious concepts. He saw Force everywhere, and attributed to it personality. From his very birth as a human genus he had realized the importance of Stone. Indeed, stone in the hands of apes made them into men. Man emerged from the brute as a stone-using creature. He flung stones at his enemies—as do even the baboon and the ape—as a very effective way of beating them off. He flung stones one at another and delighted in the sparks this gave rise to; and so, long afterwards, discovered how to make fire when the lightning failed him as a fire-raiser. He used the sharp-edged sections of the broken stones as implements and weapons. He piled stones one on top of the other to restrict the entrances to his caverns, and became a builder. He felt an ever-increasing admiration for huge monoliths, not without some phallic signification. He deified force, and was not daunted by the invisibility of influence in his ever more daring speculations.

All this time, and in reality down to about 300 years ago, man imagined the Earth on which he dwelt to be the centre of the Universe. The sun might be a wandering god, or God's agent in the service of the earth; the moon was a puzzling timekeeper and fixed his months, though after a time he preferred for the regulation of the year to go by the sun, which in its risings and settings shifted its position in the heavens along a scrupulously ordered path. The fixed stars were either personages permanently installed in the heavenly vault, though periodically journeying round the earth, or they were holes in some solid dome of dark-blue through which an unex-

plained outer glory shone. The planets were irrational wanderers and minor deities, associated in course of time either with manliness, kingliness, sprightly youth, maundering age, or with the full beauty of the perfect woman. The earth was either an inconceivably enormous disc resting on a super-elephant or super-tortoise, or floating free in the Universe. It must have an under side, and be detached or semi-detached from everything else; otherwise the sun, the stars, the moon, the planets could not perform their daily or their nightly round. Two or three Greek philosophers and geographers who shone in that wonderful 300 years of Greek effulgence which declined with the growth of the Roman Empire had conceived of the earth being a round ball, arguing no doubt from the shape of the moon or the sun; and it is thought that one or two of them even glimpsed the heliocentric theory and guessed that the sun might be the centre round which the earth, the moon, the stars, and planets revolved. But this idea, if it actually had birth in the third century before the Christian era, died with its utterers, and in no way shaped the thoughts or the religions of humanity which we have mechanically inherited. In our conceptions of Religion we remained with the dogma of the Earth being everything and the Universe merely an appendage, not only down to three hundred years ago, but over the vast proportion of humanity down to the present day. So little is astronomy taught in our schools and colleges, so little does it enter into the conceptions, say, of the agricultural labourer or even the artisan, among Christian peoples—the masses, in short—that they are still in their unformed speculations convinced that this little grain of dust in a Universe immeasurably vast is the end-all and be-all of everything. There is a vague sort of after-world in the sky for those who have been good, and there is a vague

region of torment, possibly below the earth, for those who have been bad. But the Earth in God's eyes is everything. This feeling perfuses all the Christian Churches, not excepting the freest of Free Churches. It is as much at the back of the Quaker's mind as it dominates the intelligence of the Jew and Muhammadan, of the Roman Catholic or Greek Church adherent.

The first blow, however, to this comfortable theory—which, if our happiness and ease of mind had to be considered, might well have rested uncontroverted—was received from the industry of Holland. The Dutch gave great attention to the grinding of glass and of clear pebbles, and produced early in the seventeenth century a perspective glass (parent of the telescope) and a microscope. Armed with such things, the scientific men of Italy, France, Holland, Britain, and Germany soon explored the infinitely vast and the very minute. In the same century they saw the planets enlarged to the size of the moon, and detected the flagellate animalcules that generate life in the egg. Science in the seventeenth century took giant strides and definitely parted company with religious belief, though the separation of the two was only dimly recognized. We read of the agonies of mind passed through by Galileo. Although he was obliged to uphold his heliocentric theory, he nevertheless strove to believe in the conventional God of Christianity, in Heaven and Hell and Purgatory. Sir Isaac Newton's orthodoxy, from the Anglican point of view, was unquestionable. After all, there still remained the problem of the origin of life and the excessive differentiation on this planet of living forms. Acting on the anthropomorphic conceptions of early Man, the wise men of the last two centuries argued that all this creation must point to a Creator; and the Babylonian-Jewish-Persian concept of one great creative God

held the field. This Force, conceived of, whether consciously or unconsciously, by many still as a gigantic Man ("an old man in a temper"—as nineteenth century irreverence summed up the conception), at some period of the Earth's history, probably not more than 4,000 or 5,000 years ago, brought all the visible creation into being, shaped the Earth itself; and with his Divine hands formed, as a human potter would from clay, creeping things, fishes in the sea, birds in the air, beasts on the land, and semi-divine Man himself "in God's own image." Even at the present day nineteen-twentieths among the Christians who think at all, all the Muhammadans, and probably all the Hindus, think of God or a god as having the shape more or less of a human being, with eyes and hands, legs and torso. As the Caucasian's religious conceptions have long dominated the world, the fashionable type of god is more or less derived from Greek sculptury; but in the impurer Indian faiths he is sleek, almond-eyed, yellow-complexioned, and monotonously squatting. In Japan he is a gigantic Mikado with a Roman nose; and, curiously enough, among the civilized and semi-civilized Amerindians before the coming of the Spaniards the principal deities were of almost Japanese appearance. So far as the Negro or Negroid pictures him at all, he is dark-complexioned: though many of the Negro concepts of the Divine Being tend rather more to the Egyptian type.

In the second half of the nineteenth century Darwin's theories dealt as great a blow in cultivated minds at the personality of God, as the theories of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo had in the seventeenth century affected the importance in relativity of our little planet. Darwin showed that, even though some immediate interference of Divine force or energy may have kindled inert matter into living protoplasm, the differentiation of the forms of

life on earth might be due entirely to natural causes, to the operation and reaction of the laws of the Universe. There might be a law-giver irradiating all this Universe, but he would work through the very laws he had set in force, and not, as it were, descend on this planet and fashion one after the other, with extraordinary recklessness and fecklessness, the enormous variety of animals and vegetables which people it. The Darwinian theory is not perhaps the last and most elaborated explanation which human science will give of the origin of species and of the evolution of Man; but it has so far satisfied the minds of reasonable people that it has been a potent means of robbing Man's God of human personality. God is infinitely more remote now from the thoughts of the educated few than he was prior to 1859.

Darwin, however, so presented his theory that it did not shock overmuch the religious sensibilities of his time. It still remained possible to believe in an All-wise and infinitely loving Deity who never did anything, however seemingly irrational or cruel, without the ultimate end in view of Man's betterment and happiness.

This outlook, however, was again disturbed by the publication in 1874 of one of the most remarkable essays as yet written in our literature: Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man*. Winwood Reade, a cousin of the novelist Charles Reade, was a rather idle, dissipated young man at Oxford, of indifferent health, but of very inquiring and rebellious mind. He took an early opportunity of visiting Africa, attracted by the glamour of its mysteries and possibilities. During the 'sixties he wrote *Savage Africa* and *An African Sketch Book*, two of the most illuminative essays on Negro Africa which have ever appeared, and infinitely superior in their insight and their accuracy of perception to the works of many a much-vaunted student of Africa in subsequent times.

Taken prisoner by a suspicious chief and kept captive for some three months in a town near the sources of the Niger, Winwood Reade, to cope with boredom, illness, and semi-starvation, set himself to reflect on what the human species has passed through in its unconscious attempts to emerge from the brute and to reach something like divinity. And so in this unsavoury hut at Falaba he wrote down the first sketch of *The Martyrdom of Man*. He had previously absorbed, to a remarkable degree for the time in which he lived, all writings that bore on the true history of the human species, of nations, and of empires. He was possessed of real genius, and his fancy took flights from one stepping-stone to another. This makes his theories, published more than forty years ago, read like an absolutely modern tract. He closes his wonderful survey of Man's past by some equally astonishing predictions as to his immediate future (since realized), and by this suggestion of a theory : that Man, so far from having been created, may be himself the germ of deity and a creator, the "grain of mustard seed," coming into being as an inconspicuous ruler of a tiny planet, but in the course of ages and æons of time becoming a master of life, extending his sway, first over the solar system, and then possibly over the whole Universe: a theory no more unreasonable and just as permissible as any of the other guesses at the mysteries that surround us—mysteries of the past and of the future.

Another seer—also, so to speak, an amateur in philosophy, and yet one of those men thinking far ahead of the decade or the century in which they lived—was George du Maurier, who in his beautiful story of *Peter Ibbetson* dwells on all the chances of the immortality of the soul, and pictures some such force as that which we call the soul subsisting after bodily death, and all these individual forces uniting in time and space to form God.

For what do we really know? We may divine, we may guess, we may theorize, we may hope; but what do we really *know* about the mysteries of Religion? What is the real difference between Religion and Science? A little parable drawn by du Maurier himself might be inserted here. At the beginning of the 'nineties, when nursing the sick and wounded was being advocated as a serious profession for women, and the importance of trained female nurses had been realized by great doctors and surgeons, many amateur nurses rushed into the field in the belief that anyone who could place a cool hand on a fevered brow, or assume an affectionate bedside manner and tilt the cup to the parched lips, could be a nurse. Some, again, were attracted to this calling by idle morbidity, or in the hope of flirtations with doctors and a possible marriage. So there was drawn this little picture in *Punch*. A great physician receiving in his study a female of uncertain age and theatrical costume. And the great doctor says to her: "Well—er—but—*are you trained?*" And she replies, with a dramatic gesture: "No, *not* trained, but—*gifted*." That is too much the attitude of modern Religion towards Science; and in this respect modern Religion is often more unreasonably expressed by its lay advocates than by its ordained priests. It claims to be "gifted," to be independent of the logical conclusions of Science. It not only claims "inspiration" as its own peculiar attribute, but, worse still, it relies to a bigoted extent on the inspiration of uneducated men: men without any science whatever, who wrote, spoke, and thought between 500 B.C. and 600 A.C. Some of these men were born poets; and just as you may have an inspired Shakespeare or an amateur philosopher like du Maurier and an unorthodox historian like Winwood Reade giving us guesses as to the past and future, which at any rate recommend themselves to us as probable;

so the whole course of recent human history—say from 1000 B.C. to the present day—has been made illustrious by its prophets, its great teachers: a mythical Quetzalcoatl, a legendary Moses, an actual Confucius, Buddha, and, most wonderful of all, Jesus the Nazarene; Archimedes and Aristotle, Pliny and Lucian, Roger Bacon and Leonardo da Vinci, Laplace, Goethe, and Tennyson. These have been men, as yet unexplained to us, whose minds can leap ahead of known facts, can guess at the past, the explanation of the present, and dimly at the things that are to be. Sometimes their guesses turn out to be marvellously right. Sometimes they are wrong, or are at present unfulfilled or unproved. But they are the exceptions to the general rule of humdrum progress. We dare not be sure till time has tested their utterances that we are right in believing in any teacher who is "gifted but not trained."

In what way is scientific research more certain than religious divination? The correctness of the latter can only be proved by results; and so far as human judgment goes, which is the only standard we can rely on, it has often proved to be entirely wrong—entirely wrong in ethics, in hygiene, and as a producer and insurer of human happiness (the only goal I care to aim at). Science, on the other hand, proceeds from one proved fact to another. It often makes mistakes, but it is humbly ready to correct its errors, and the volume of truth as an outcome of scientific research increases at the rate of compound interest. Everything is based, of course, on the test of the human senses—the only moderately certain test that we can go by. Chief of all these senses for finding out the secrets of the Universe is the sight; hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling can only be applied to the things of this world. By means of our optic nerves, applied to ever more and more perfected human in-

struments, we can magnify the planets and the moon, find new satellites, weigh the sun, determine the chemical composition of the stars and nebulæ, and time the passage of light. These marvellous researches of the human eye, so far, though they have sounded the depths of the Universe, have found no God. We may adopt all sorts of plausible arguments from the few facts known to us; we may reason from one earthly analogy to another. All these guesses are permissible; all these theories should not be refused publication. But they should oppress no one, and bind no intelligence which they cannot convince. Religion, as the conception of a heavenly being, or heavenly beings, hovering about the Earth and concerning themselves greatly with the affairs of Man, has been abolished for all thoughtful and educated people by the discoveries of Science. Perhaps, however, I should not say "abolished," as being too final; I should prefer to say that such theories have been put entirely in the background as unimportant compared with the awful problems which affect the welfare and progress of humanity on this planet. Religion must, as Cotter Morison said in 1887, henceforth take a new form: it must be the Service of Man; not the acclaiming, the adulation, the beseeching of a God of whom, from a positive point of view, we know absolutely *nothing*: a God that originated first as a tribal deity of a predatory desert tribe, and then, through the purer-minded Jews of the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, expanded into the sole ruler of the Universe; but a Universe consisting entirely of an Earth domed by a solid firmament and served by sun and moon.

The first great impulse leading humanity from a vain worship of imagined gods—a worship distinguished by many horrible and elaborate rites, needless abstinences,

and still more stupid excesses—arose from the three years' ministry of Yeshua bar Yosef, whom we know not at all by his real name, but by our modern mispronunciation of the Greek version—Jesus the Christ, Joshua the Anointed. All who endeavour to take an impartial survey of the teaching of Christ as set forth with more or less accuracy in the four Gospels (but most truthfully in the Gospel of St. Mark) must feel that they are dealing with a development in human thought of such a singular and far-reaching quality that it may well have seemed to the minds of its period and the minds of eighteen centuries that followed, not merely human, but divine. And, indeed, so it may turn out to be; for those who follow an ethical religion are as little anxious to dogmatize negatively as affirmatively. There *may* be a plan and a purpose of some as yet unrealized divine force pulsating through the Universe and the solar system, ordaining the fashioning of Man by this cruel process of martyrdom, a martyrdom checked at intervals by a bounding forward of the human intelligence and a further establishment of happiness; and this force may have made of the child of Mary one of its greatest agents in cosmic evolution. The coming of Christ, his three years' teaching in Palestine, really introduced the Gospel of Pity and the Service of Man. He and his immediate disciples brushed on one side the fretting restrictions and tabus of the Jewish religion, which was no better than any other preceding religion, except in that it prepared the way for the coming of Christ, and indeed was a true John the Baptist for several of his great pronouncements.

Jesus kindled a spirit nearly equal to his own in some of his disciples. What definition of Religion is more beautiful and practical than the oft-quoted, but very seldom followed, prescription of the apostle Yakob

(ridiculously known to us by the Catalonian name of James): "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." But a Romanized Jew, Saul of Tarsus, really established Christianity as a world religion. Save for his energy and intellect his faith might have perished completely after the fall of Jerusalem, with no record beyond a casual mention in Josephus. Paul, however, introduced dogmas and casuistry. Still the faith remained —so far as its service of Man was concerned—pretty much as it had been promulgated by Jesus himself, until its location in Asia Minor, when Judea had been laid absolutely waste by the furious Romans. In Asia Minor it received innumerable accretions of older myths, theories, and dogmas, and these were added to when it became Hellenized in Byzantium and Latinized in Italy, Berberized in North Africa, Hamiticized in Egypt, and Kelticized in Gaul and Ireland. It appealed enormously to the slaves, the ignorant, the oppressed, the savage peoples, the unhappy; and less and less to the men of science, who at last became its active opponents. Christianity conquered, but Science perished, at any rate in the Roman world.

Then arose another monotheist Religion (and I will interpolate here that there is no particular virtue in monotheism ; it is no more unreasonable to believe in a hierarchy of gods or two co-equal gods of good and evil, or a god and a goddess, than it is to believe in a single indivisible deity), that of the Arabian bandit and inspired commercial traveller, Muhammad—a man not without some charm of character (evidently), not without purity of thought and sweetness of intention, but a very imperfect human being as compared with the stainless figure of the Christ. Muhammad's revolt began with the rise of a successful robber-with-a-grievance into the chief of

a confederacy, who from vanity desires also to impose his spiritual rule on the people. He was an exact parallel to the ignorant American Puritans who founded Mormonism, or any other of the eccentric, half-spiritual, half-sordid faiths that have sprung into being in modern North America. But, like Mormonism, Islam was only another graft on Judaism; arose, like so much of modern Christianity, out of the Jewish Scriptures. At the same time it was a protest against the ridiculous asceticism which had grossly distorted Christ's teaching in the Churches of Greece, Rome, Egypt, and Carthage. It also protested against the want of logic on the part of the Christian divines who asserted the oneness of God and yet divided the Deity into three persons and placed the mother of Christ as a goddess in the skies, as Queen of Heaven.[1]

But Muhammadanism, like contemporary Christianity, at first despised Science. Nevertheless, in Mesopotamia some Persian influence mingled with the nonsense of ignorant Arabia, and intervened actually to save the science of the Greek and Roman philosophers from positive extinction. We must thank the Muhammadan East and Muhammadan West (in Spain and Barbary) for maintaining the continuance of Science as a living force until renascent Europe could once more take the lamp from the hands of Islam. Then, strange to say, the Muhammadan world fell back into quasi-barbarism, till at last in the nineteenth century it looked upon everything to do with Science as the work of the Devil and the inheritance of the unbeliever.

[1] The protest of Islam, of course, was equally wanting in rationality. For if you are to have a King of Heaven, why not also a Queen? The worship of the mother of Christ was, of course, nothing but a revival of that most alluring and in some ways very beautiful worship of the deified mother, the purest form of human love.

But perhaps Divine force—if there be such a thing—is behind all these troubles of humanity, regretting profoundly the miseries and checks that we have to endure, but only able to work with imperfect agents, and for ever combating the Devil, the *vis inertiæ* of the material world. Gradually Science has triumphed in civilized countries. It emerged in open conflict with Religion—as I have said—in the seventeenth century, grew stronger and wiser in the eighteenth century, and achieved its final triumph by the close of the nineteenth, most wonderful of all arbitrary centenary divisions of Man's history. But, at the same time, true Christianity has likewise grown in force. Men are returning more and more in their thoughts to the principles laid down by Jesus the Christ, for our relations not only with one another, but with the beasts and flowers of the field. Christianity has inspired and is inspiring care and regard for the marvellous, useful, or lovable beasts and birds, which still pagan man, in the form of the average British sportsman or plumage-trader, would destroy either for the mere pleasure of killing or for some paltry profit. True Christianity protects the primrose from the devastating crowd of a bank holiday, and the *Wellingtonia gigantea* from the thoughtless destruction of the American lumberman. Scientific men may abolish the nonsense in the worship of the Unknown and none the less be the followers of Christ, distilling from his teaching an uplifting code of laws for the governance of humanity.

True Christianity, in short, is the service, first of all, of Man; and, secondly, the ethical regulation of man's relations with other living creatures on this planet; in the hope that in so serving Man, in so protecting from destruction all that is beautiful and harmless on this planet, it will be equally

serving the unknown God. True ethical religion endeavours to steer a straight course between the absurdities of Buddhism—which would take no steps against Man's natural enemies, the insect and the invisible germ it carries—and the ruthless prepossession on the part of one variety of mankind that other varieties are to be oppressed or exterminated, and all creatures on this planet are to be destroyed or tortured for his amusement or his gain. True ethical religion is Christianity without its Jewish precepts of empirical hygiene and self-mortification, or its Gnostic and Manichæan dogmas of unpractical nonsense and unprovable veracity. Let us hope that the conflict of Religion and Science will end at this compromise—the Service of Man. Let us be humble-minded, and serve Man before we waste our time in genuflections and sacrifices to any force outside this planet, as to the wants and needs and composition of which, so far, we are in complete ignorance.

CHAPTER II

THE HIGHER CRITICISM

BY ALFRED W. MARTIN

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MAN has always been a critic, and since his judgments have improved with his power and opportunity to observe closely and give order and precision to what he knows, criticism has had a progressive history. The sole difference between the savage and the savant, with reference to criticism, is one of degree, not of kind. Moreover, the present era, far from being *the* age of criticism, is only the latest stage in a process as old as man and destined to continue as long as there are thinking men and women on the earth.

Applied to ancient books, criticism means determining their date, genuineness, and authenticity. By "genuineness" is meant that the given work was written by the author whose name it bears, while "authenticity" relates to the accuracy and fulness with which the facts have been presented. And these issues are determined by both external and internal evidence. When considering the former, we ask such questions as these: How far back can reference to the book be traced? Where is mention first made of it? Who refers to it? What is the value of his testimony? Turning to internal evidence, we ask: Does the book contain any record of its own composition? Is it possible to trace the materials the author had at hand, and to fix the mode in which they were

combined? Are there any hints within the work as to its date or the age in which it was produced?

Biblical criticism is only part of a larger literary movement aiming at the elucidation of what is obscure regarding the origin and growth of the Bible books. Criticism of these had its beginnings in the discussions of the early Christian Fathers—Origen, Jerome, Irenæus—as to the number and order of the gospels, and the admission of certain books into the "canon" of scriptures. In the Middle Ages the name of Rabbi Ben Ezra towers above all others. Indeed, he may be called the father of Pentateuchal criticism, for his commentary on the first five books of the Old Testament, published at Toledo, towards the middle of the twelfth century, is the lineal ancestor of most of the works on this subject.

In the Renaissance two other Jews, Spinoza and Astruc, carried on the work Ben Ezra had so auspiciously begun. And just before them appeared Erasmus and Luther—the former debating, with rare skill, the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews; the latter, with characteristic bluntness and frankness, disputing the merit of various Biblical books, especially the Epistle of James, which he styled "an epistle of straw" because it did not teach the doctrine of "justification by faith." Contemporary with him was Carlstadt, who took radical ground touching the Johannine authorship of the Apocalypse, daring to doubt that it was the work of John, the disciple of Jesus — a position sustained by the great majority of modern scholars.

Characteristic of all Biblical criticism down to this time was the adoption of certain assumptions regarded as fundamental to all discussion of the subject. It was assumed, for example, that the books were divinely inspired, and written in the order in which we now have them. It was believed that the records of events repre-

sented the testimony of eye-witnesses, and that all the miracles of both Testaments were actual occurrences. It was further maintained that Jesus was intellectually infallible and morally perfect, and that Christianity must stand in a class by itself as the only true, divine, and absolute religion. But about the year 1770 Lessing and his younger contemporary, Herder, came forward with the proposition that the Bible should be read and judged as any other book, because it shows the evidences of being a human production. Moreover, these critics declared that no real harm can follow such procedure, because whatever is true in the Bible now will remain so when criticism has completed its work. In the course of the following decade this startling proposal was systematically adopted by Eichhorn, who, in 1782, launched upon an eager, expectant world the "higher criticism," as he himself styled it in the preface to his *Einleitung in das alte Testament.* To him this criticism of the Bible was "higher" than that of his predecessors, because conducted *above* the plane of unwarranted presuppositions, prejudices, and preconceptions. That is to say, he proposed to treat the Bible books in the same spirit as the Greeks in Alexandria, in the third century before our era, dealt with the *Iliad*, the Homeric authorship of which they disputed.

But besides this interpretation of the word "higher," as given by Eichhorn, two other meanings have been attached to it. It was used to designate criticism that is positive and constructive in purpose and in results, as contrasted, say, with that of the French Encyclopædists of the eighteenth century—Diderot, d'Alembert, and Voltaire.

Assuredly the criticism which lacks historical perspective, which accepts myths and legends as literal facts, which assumes that the Pentateuch was the

work of Moses because his name appears on the first page, which asks no question as to the origin, date, genuineness, authenticity, and *Tendenz* of the books to be criticized, must be designated "lower" as compared to that which rises to the plane where full cognizance is taken of these fundamental prerequisites for judging Bible books.

A third meaning given to the term "higher" is one that contrasts it with textual criticism. The function of the latter is to determine whether or not the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and the Greek text of the New Testament actually represent the original writing of the authors. But behind this text problem is that of the sources and method employed by authors and editors in making the text. Here is a problem *higher up* the stream of investigation, and to this the term "Higher Criticism" has also been applied. But while cognizance must be taken of the second and third of the meanings attached to the term "Higher Criticism," it is in its original signification, as exemplified in the work of Eichhorn, that the phrase is generally understood. Following in the path marked out by its originator, one representative after another of the higher criticism of the Bible has appeared, each carrying the process of untrammelled, fearless, searching investigation a step further, eschewing the *a priori* method of approach, and in truly scientific fashion, regardless of results as well as of traditions, seeking to determine the precise truth concerning the authorship and date of the Bible books, the conditions under which they were written, the point of view of the writers, and the actual course of the political, social, moral, and religious development of the people. To recall the names of Eichhorn's successors and their respective contributions to our present heritage of Biblical knowledge would carry us too far afield. Suffice it only

to note that the process is still in progress, new problems arising as a result of what has already been achieved, and not a few old problems reappearing for fresh solution.

The positive and constructive aims of the Higher Criticism, in its dealing with the Old and New Testaments, are not far to seek. Confining our attention, for the nonce, to the New Testament, these aims may be summarized under the following heads :—

(1) It endeavours to restore, as fully and as accurately as possible, not only the original Greek text of our Gospels, but also the documents on which they were based.

(2) It seeks to go beyond the Greek translation to the original Aramaic which Jesus spoke, beyond his words to the precise thoughts he sought to convey, and, again, beyond both his thoughts and their medium of expression to the age in which he lived—the political, social, theological, and moral environment in which he was brought up.

(3) It aims to come into possession of the historical facts concerning the person and daily life of Jesus—a task fraught with tremendous difficulties of which the student gets but a foretaste when he learns how the available records came into being, and discovers that the first three Gospels, despite their many points of resemblance, yet differ in important particulars, while the fourth is altogether *sui generis*, and not to be consulted for purely biographical information.

(4) It undertakes the task of re-arranging the New Testament books in their chronological order, so that the reader may trace with ease the various phases of development in the life and thought of the first century and a half of our era.

(5) It connects this literature with that of the two

preceding centuries, singularly prolific as they were in literary creations, so that the reader is enabled to trace the birth and growth of those parties, institutions, doctrines, and morals which one meets with first in the New Testament.

(6) Even the so-called "Apocrypha" of the New Testament are made to do service in promoting the constructive purpose in view.

(7) The sacred books that record the life of the Buddha and of Zoroaster and of other great religious leaders of whom wonder-stories have been told are also consulted.

(8) It essays the further task of endeavouring to decide when, where, by whom, and how these canonical books were written. Are they pure biographies in the sense that they recount the life of Jesus regardless of any preconceived idea of his person and his mission, or do they reveal signs of *Tendenz*, of partisanship in their sympathies with one or another of the two dominant parties in the early Church? To what extent are the narratives real records of real events? How shall we account for the differences among them in their descriptions of persons, sayings, and events? Which comes closest to the original?

In the light of such constructive aims as these (and we have not exhausted the list) there can be no question as to the serious and reverent spirit in which the work is being undertaken. And the results have fully justified it. Chief among them must be set down the re-arrangement of the Bible books in their chronological order, and the settlement of many a disputed question concerning authorship.

What an incalculable boon it is to have the books of the Old Testament chronologically arranged! How futile and distressing has been the effort of the ordinary

lay reader to follow the development of Hebrew history, law, morals, and religion with the books arranged in the order seen in the Bible! How hopeless to pass from the book of Joshua to Judges, or from the stately, well-rounded characters of the patriarchs to people like Ehud and Jephthah and Gideon! What woeful confusion of thought in studying the Law-books of the Pentateuch when read in the order of their occurrence in the Bible! How utterly irreconcilable the first and last parts of the book of Isaiah, published as they are in one work and under one name!

But now you will ask, "If there be this literary chaos in the Old Testament, how came it to be such?" The answer is, in the first place, that literary ownership, in ancient Palestine and Egypt, did not have the significance attaching to it that it has with us. It was not an uncommon thing in those days for manuscripts to be written without any author's name attached; and even, sometimes, without as much as a title to serve as a superscription. No wonder, then, that editors, when they were making up a scroll, combined various anonymous manuscripts, using, as the principle of their combination, such literary resemblances as they thought they detected. Thus it was that the books of Isaiah, Zechariah, Proverbs, and Psalms were made up in the form familiar to us, though two or more centuries separate sections of each of these books.

Moreover, it must be remembered that parchment was very expensive; hence, on grounds of sheer economy, scribes would copy upon a single parchment-scroll all that they could, regardless of all but the similarity of thought they fancied they saw in the several originals.

Here, then, are some of the reasons that account for the disordered arrangement of the Old Testament books.

By appeal to internal evidence the problem of date in

the case of each of the Bible books has been solved with but few differences of opinion among those competent to judge.

Similarly, by the self-same appeal, a second great constructive result has been reached by the representatives of the Higher Criticism. I refer to the solution of many a vexed question relating to the authorship of Bible books. Perhaps the most conspicuous of the assured results of the Higher Criticism is the non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. How could Moses have written the account of his own death and the eulogy that we find in the thirty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy? How can we harmonize the three legal codes in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, if Moses was the author of all three of them? How could Moses have been the author of two sets of Ten Commandments (Exodus xx and Deuteronomy v), which differ from one another in several important particulars? Why was it that the ritualistic and ceremonial rules enjoined in the Book of Leviticus were never fulfilled, either in the life of the priests or laymen until about the year 450 B.C., if Moses was the author of them? Would such a God-fearing màn as the prophet Hosea [mouthpiece of Yahweh] have broken the second Commandment of the Decalogue if that Commandment had been issued by Moses?[1] The record shows that Moses himself had made a brazen serpent which King Hezekiah had destroyed because of its evil influence on the worship of the Hebrews in his day.[2]

Such are some of the reasons which internal evidence furnishes for the conclusion that the Pentateuch cannot have been the work of Moses. On the same basis, it has been determined that David could not have written any

[1] Hosea, iii, 4.

[2] 2 Kings, xviii, 4.

of the Psalms that bear his name. Internal evidence points to the production of the Psalms in one or another of four distinct periods of Jewish history, and all dating from the exile. So, in the same way, it has been discovered that the book of Isaiah is a composite work in which several authors had a hand.

Thus, by determining the date and authorship of the Old Testament books, the Higher Criticism has made it possible for us to trace the whole historical, political, ethical, and religious development of the Jewish people from the invasion of the land of Canaan in the twelfth century before our era down to the century before Jesus. And in the case of the New Testament books a similar service has been rendered for the period extending from the time of John the Baptist to the beginnings of the Christian Church.

Yet, notwithstanding the constructive aims of the Higher Criticism and the positive, helpful results already reached, the notion continues to prevail that the interests of morality and religion are jeopardized, if not ruined, by such critical investigation. Let us briefly review the more important of the charges that have been made against the Higher Criticism, in order that we may see what the facts concerning it are.

First, we are told that the Higher Criticism is "destructive of established conclusions." Here we have one of those half-truths which so often are far more dangerous than outright falsehood. To say that the Higher Criticism is "destructive" is to mistake a process for the product of the process. All constructive work of whatever kind involves a certain measure of destruction. You cannot build houses without first destroying the trees that shall provide the lumber; without destroying the quarries that shall supply the foundation stones; without destroying the iron mines

out of which ore may be extracted to manufacture the nails and other hardware. All science is, in some measure, destructive in pursuing its constructive aim. The astronomy of Adams, Leverrier, and Sir Robert Ball destroyed some of the astronomy of Copernicus, as he, in turn, destroyed some of the astronomy (indeed a good deal of the astronomy) of Ptolemy, and as he, in turn, undermined astrology.

The chemistry of Richards and of Rutherford has destroyed some of the chemistry of Sir Humphry Davy and of Michael Faraday, as they, in turn, put an end to the pseudo-science of alchemy.

So the criticism of Wellhausen destroyed Vatke's, in part, as he laid waste much of the work of Eichhorn. Let it be understood and remembered that all scientific work, of whatever kind, is relative. No one critic reaches the full-orbed, full-fledged truth, but each makes his advance upon his predecessors, endeavouring to improve upon their results by building still better than they.

Lachmann spent nearly the whole of his life pulling the *Iliad* to pieces. De Wette gave twenty-two years to dissecting the Pentateuch. Canon Cheyne devoted fifty years of his life to splitting up the Book of Isaiah into its component parts. But, mark you, none of these critics *stopped* at this destructive work. In each case the book was put together again, and in a fashion to benefit all future readers.

Again, it is said that the Higher Criticism is "dangerous." And so, forsooth, it is to those who fail to see its fundamental purpose, its reverent spirit, its clarifying results.

Preparation for national defence is dangerous, because it may lead to aggressive militarism if not properly safeguarded; but should we on that account forego prepara-

tion for national defence, assuming that "preparedness" is desirable and necessary?

When Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath," he uttered a most dangerous maxim, for even in our own day it is quoted by Sunday golfers and Sunday excursionists when seeking to justify their absence from church, or meeting-house, or synagogue. Would it, then, have been better if Jesus had never uttered the sentence because of the liability to misinterpretation to which it has been subjected?

"Dangerous" the Higher Criticism is, precisely as Dante's denial of the dependence of the State upon the Church for its authority was dangerous because the ecclesiastical hierarchy construed it as the prelude to anarchy and irreligion, little dreaming that the illustrious successors of Dante—Mazzini and Cavour—five centuries after his death, would appeal to his *De Monarchia* when justifying their demand for a free Church in a free State.

Dangerous the Higher Criticism is, in the same sense that Darwin's discovery of the chief factor in the origination of species was dangerous, because it was tantamount to "materialism" and "atheism" in the eyes of the undiscerning masses, who saw in his partial explanation of evolution not a mere secondary cause, but a veritable substitute for God!

Dangerous, again, it is, in the same way that the uninitiated conceived Felix Adler's break with Judaism to be; because, in their estimate, his "free" religion was certain to breed moral anarchy and gross impiety. But each of these pioneers was on the truth-seeking path, from which deviation was impossible save by searing the conscience and tarnishing the soul. For them the promised land of the ideal lay on *the other side* of the Jordan

of doubt; their only safety was in pressing on to the further shore.

So the representatives of the Higher Criticism, conscious of the goal to which their work led, had to run the risk of being misunderstood by people who saw dangers only because they mistook the somewhat destructive *process* for the wholly constructive *result*.

A third accusation is to the effect that the Higher Criticism is "detrimental to the interests of religion." But even its negative results are found to be aids to the advancement of religious thought. What a spiritual boon it is to have our conception of God relieved of the frightful strain put upon it by Bible passages which affirm that God called Abraham to slay his own son, ordered Samuel to "hew Agag in pieces," and bade Moses "despoil the Egyptians" of their jewellery! Those charges against the character of deity trouble us no more, thanks to the constructive work of the Higher Criticism. What a relief it is to know that the first chapter of Genesis is a religious poem, and not a scientific treatise! What a comfort it is to know that the stories of the Garden of Eden and the Flood are not to be accepted as history, but as a primitive attempt to account for the origin of sin and retribution! What a help it is to read the Book of Jonah, with the fore-knowledge that it is not history, but an ethical romance, filled brimful of ethical instruction for America, and for all the world! What a help it is to know how it happened that the author of "Chronicles" came to regard King David as "a man after God's own heart" when the author of "Kings" presents him as a man after the heart of no decent-minded person whatsoever,—not because he was an adulterer, not because he was a murderer, but because he was not a gentleman, because he lacked the two cardinal qualities of chivalry and honour!

Once more, we are told that the results of the Higher Criticism are "revolutionary." Well, so indeed they must seem to him who does not know the slow, successive steps by which those results were reached. The ninety-five theses which Luther nailed on the church door at Wittenberg must have looked mighty revolutionary to the average spectator, seeing them as he passed by; but to the man who had read the works of John Goch and John Wessel there was nothing revolutionary or startling in those ninety-five theses. The substance of them had already appeared in the works of these earlier critics of Romanism.

The doctrine of natural selection as expounded by Darwin looked revolutionary to most Englishmen and Americans at the time of its first pronouncement; but to the man who had read the works of Erasmus Darwin, Robert Chambers, Buffon, Kant, and Goethe there was nothing startling, much less revolutionary, in what Darwin had disclosed. His statement was recognized as simply the latest stage in a process of explanation that had been going on for centuries, and the end of which is not yet.

So with the Higher Criticism of the Old Testament no less than of the New Testament: the results look revolutionary to the people who are ignorant of the slow successive stages by which those results have been reached, beginning with those Jewish critics who, about the year 100, inaugurated Biblical criticism, and reaching down to our own Professors Schmidt of Cornell, Toy of Harvard, and Kent of Yale.

A fifth and final charge to which our attention must be directed is expressed in these words: "The Higher Criticism means death to the spiritual values of the Bible." Let us meet this charge by putting the following questions:—Has *The Imitation of Christ* by

Thomas à Kempis lost one iota of its value as a medium for spiritual culture because it is now believed that he did not write that book? Suppose it should be proven that Bacon wrote the plays of Shakespeare, would that invalidate in the slightest degree the significance of those plays for our intellectual and moral development?

Practically every single phrase that Jesus uttered in the Sermon on the Mount can be found in one or another of the Jewish books prior to his time. Does that in the slightest degree reduce the life-giving value of that Sermon? Because it has been found that Moses did not deliver or originate the Ten Commandments, and that David did not write the Psalms, are we to discontinue teaching our children the Psalms and the Ten Commandments?

Did the astronomer profane the heavens when he banished from the firmament the divinities with which a superstitious reverence had endowed the planets and stars? Nay, he did but sanctify the heavens anew, for they are still the dwelling-place of the mysterious and the Eternal. Similarly, the exponents of the Higher Criticism did not profane the Bible when they banished a superstitious reverence for it; when they brought order out of chaos and made clear what was obscure. All honour and gratitude, then, to the champions of the Higher Criticism, for *they have given the Bible back to us*, and through their constructive work made the Bible more readable, more intelligible, and more inspiring than it ever was before.

CHAPTER III

RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY

BY WILLIAM ARCHER

BEFORE considering what democracy owes or does not owe to religion, let us be clear as to what we mean by these terms. Democracy, for our present purpose, does not mean parliamentary government, or universal suffrage, or any particular form of machinery; it denotes the principle that the welfare of the whole body of citizens is the supreme law, and that their welfare can best be attained, not by obedience to the will of one man or of a few, but by the expression of the collective will —so far as it can be ascertained—in the national life. I know that twenty holes can be picked in this definition, but 'twill serve for present purposes. It assumes that even an imperfect attempt at government by and for the people is to be preferred to the most enlightened autocracy or oligarchy. The question whether this is true—whether democracy is in fact a valid ideal—will be briefly considered before we close. For the present, we take an affirmative answer for granted. Religion, again, we define as the guidance of life by ordinances laying claim to supernatural authority, and the postponement of mundane to extra-mundane interests, of things temporal to things eternal. These are the characteristics, not of Christianity alone, but of all religions which have emerged from the chrysalis stage of magic. The Christian religion, however, will naturally be that which chiefly con-

cerns us, if only because it is the dominant religion of Europe, which is the seed-plot of democracy.

It may seem that in saying this we have acknowledged a fundamental relation—a relation of cause and effect—between Christianity and democracy. But a little reflection will show that this is far from being the case. If democracy (as no one can deny) is a product of the European genius, it follows that in its origin, at any rate, it has nothing to do with Christianity, which is essentially Asiatic. And here we are on the track of a generalization which really takes us to the root of the matter. Asia is the home of religion, Europe the home of reason; and as democracy is (for better or worse) a product of reason, it is certainly foreign and uncongenial to the Asiatic influence against which European reason has had so hard a fight.

Asia and democracy may almost be called contradictory terms. In the whole history of "the brooding East," down to quite recent years, we find no glimmering dawn of the democratic idea. Huge despotisms are everywhere sanctioned and consecrated by religion. Frequently, perhaps generally, the despots are themselves objects of worship, being considered as direct descendants from the gods. In India empires rise and fall like waves of the sea, but religion never does anything to moderate the arbitrary power of the ruler, whether great or small. Brahmanism gives birth to that antithesis to democracy, the caste system; Buddhism, preaching the annihilation of the individual will, is utterly remote from any such idea as the assertion of a collective will. China and Japan[1] are ruled by despots lineally descended from the

[1] To show how difficult it is for the democratic idea to take root in Asian soil, I may note an incident which occurred in Japan in 1912. A stationmaster made some mistake which led to the delay, by an hour or two, of a train in which the Mikado was travelling.

sun or moon, or both. Persia, Babylonia, Assyria, are so many synonyms for gigantic tyrannies. Where autocracy is in any way limited, it is not by democracy, but, as among the Jews, by theocracy. Muhammadanism, while assigning a certain value to the individual human soul, leaves the human body entirely at the mercy of arbitrary power, and carries despotism in its train wherever it spreads—from Cordova in the West to Delhi in the East. There is no need to labour the point—it is too manifest. Asia, which has given birth to all the great religions, has produced not a single democracy. In Russia, where Asia and Europe meet, emperor-worship is as much a part of religion as it is in Japan.

When we turn to Europe the contrast is very striking. Both in Greece and in Rome civilization and democracy may be said to be twin-born. If anything, democracy is the elder birth; for the earliest tribal organization is more or less democratic, and authentic history begins with the attempts of despots to overthrow that organization. The attempts are for the most part defeated. "Tyrannies," indeed, spring up like mushrooms, but they are almost as short-lived. Nowhere does a despotic dynasty take permanent root. It is true that the despot is often replaced by an oligarchy rather than a democracy; but an oligarchy is, after all, a form of political life, whereas despotism means political death and petrifaction. The very word "politics" implies the democratic ideal; for the "polis" was the city state, the body of freemen collectively considered. And while the words

There was no accident, nor was His Majesty in any danger; but the stationmaster committed hara-kiri. Thereupon a university professor was so incautious as to write a letter criticizing the official's suicide as being somewhat excessive under the circumstances. He was at once dismissed from his post, boycotted, and ruined! So vigorously does despot-worship survive in a country supposed to enjoy parliamentary institutions.

"politics" and "democracy" come to us from the beginnings of Greek history, we owe to the beginning of Roman history the conception of the "res publica," the "common wealth," the republic. Even in the forests of Germany and among the fells of Scandinavia, the dawn of history reveals a firmly-established democratic tradition, or, at any rate, a tradition binding the chief or king to take counsel with a more or less extended circle of notables. The "gemot," the "moot," the "ting" (as in Storting) are words and institutions of primeval date. Germany, fighting for Kaiserism, is false to the race-ideal to which Britain, fighting for her age-old "witenagemot," is true. When we say, then, that democracy is coeval with, or even antecedent to, European civilization we are speaking the literal truth.

And if it was antecedent to civilization, much more was it antecedent to religion in the modern or Asiatic sense of the word. The common characteristic of the Hellenic and the Latin paganisms was their freedom from other-worldliness. They laid no emphasis on the life beyond the grave, of which they had but dim and indefinite conceptions.[1] The future state to which they looked forward without enthusiasm was located in a nether world, not in a world above. It did not occur to the Greek or Roman citizen that he might earn an eternity of bliss by renouncing his human dignity, and absolutely subjecting his will to that of a divinely-appointed ruler. The other life, as he conceived it, offered no reward for such a renunciation. His vote was real to him, his soul conjectural. He was conscious

[1] Orphism, and other mystery religions, may be cited in contradiction of this statement; but their influence was comparatively limited. They were the Methodism, or perhaps we should rather say the Revivalism, of the ancient world. It is worthy of note that the Pythagoreans were rabid anti-democrats.

of possessing a will, and he loved to exercise it in concert or in conflict with his fellows. He would doubtless have to leave it behind with his fleshly integument; for the shadowy State beyond the tomb was always figured as a despotism.

Was it a mere chance that the extinction of the democratic spirit in antiquity coincided, in point of time, with a great inrush of Asiatic and Egyptian superstition into the Roman world? It was partly chance, no doubt. To make the overthrow of the Republic a consequence of the popularity of Mithraism and the worship of Isis would be very absurd. But we can scarcely doubt that these heralds of Christianity helped to render men careless of the political institutions under which they lived, and ready to renounce without a struggle even the last remnants of self-government. When Christianity in time asserted itself, and absorbed all the earlier oriental cults, it brought with it a dogmatic other-worldliness which even despotism regarded as anti-social. The Christians were persecuted, not as being hostile to despotism, but rather as being contemptuous of it—not because they contested the principle of autocracy, but because they boasted themselves the thralls of an autocrat mightier than all the Cæsars.

In a sense, no doubt, Christianity was a levelling doctrine. It pronounced all men equal before the throne of God. Distinctions of race and rank were to be entirely abolished—in heaven. Here below, on the other hand, all such distinctions were to be scrupulously maintained. Extreme spiritual arrogance was to go hand-in-hand with extreme temporal humility, quietism, submission to constituted authority. There was an element of true moral sublimity in this patient, somewhat scornful, acceptance of the accidents of worldly status, economic, social, and political. It was not merely, as Nietzsche suggests, a

sour-grapes philosophy—the acquiescence of slaves in a lot which they were powerless to alter. Jesus was quite genuinely imbued with a sense of the unreality of what are called social advantages. He knew that "the rank is but the guinea stamp, the man's the gowd for a' that." No one was ever less of a snob than he. But if social advantages were unreal, so were social disadvantages. They were not worth protesting or rebelling against. Were not all wrongs, injustices, and humiliations to be evened out in heaven, where the last was to be first and the first last? Moreover, it was manifestly futile to be careful and cumbered as to political arrangements here below, when the kingdom of heaven was so near at hand. It was doubtless this consideration that made Paul as convinced a quietist as Jesus.[1] Why trouble to reconstitute a world whose lease of life was rapidly running out? The distribution of temporal power, property, and consideration was a matter of infinite unimportance in view of the impending catastrophe which was to inaugurate a reign of ideal justice and righteousness under the immediate sway of the Autocrat of the Universe. The revolution to which the Christian looked forward was one before which all political revolutions shrank into ludicrous insignificance.

Thus democracy, as a reasoned method of promoting human well-being under terrestrial conditions, finds no encouragement in the Christian scriptures. So far as they have any political application, they may be cited in favour of an irresponsible rule, deriving its authority, not from the consent of the governed, but, directly or indirectly, from divine appointment. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" was a precept that con-

[1] "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."—Romans xiii, 1.

templated no restriction by Magna Charta, Petition of Rights, or Contrat Social. All constituted authority was, if not directly imposed, at any rate licensed—or, at the lowest, winked at—by God. The theoretical equalitarianism of Jesus was of no practical effect, because it manifestly did not apply to any social conditions attainable on this earth. It is no doubt true that the general spirit of the Gospels is ultimately favourable to democracy. They are permeated with a "sweet reasonableness" which is fundamentally hostile to the claims of autocracy or of oligarchy. The sanctions which they give to constituted authority may be called disdainful rather than enthusiastic. They manifestly proceed from sheer carelessness of the things of this world, not from any reasoned theory of the benefits of irresponsible rule. But this merely means that it is useless to go for political guidance either to the Gospels or to the Epistles. Such direct guidance as they appear to give is, unfortunately, on the face of it, anti-democratic in tendency, and has been exploited to the utmost, with disastrous effect, by the supporters of arbitrary power. We all know how, in our own country, the great mass of the Anglican clergy clung desperately to the imbecile doctrine of "non-resistance," even in face of the shameless misgovernment of Charles II. and the Jesuitical tyranny of his incorrigible brother.

The Roman Catholic Church has been called a democratic institution because men of humble birth have frequently risen to great eminence, and even to the greatest, in its hierarchy.[1] But this is a mere abuse of language. An autocrat is none the less an autocrat because he is the son of a butcher or a candlestick-

[1] It is something, no doubt, that the Church should have kept alive through the Dark Ages the principle of election, which might otherwise have fallen into sheer oblivion.

maker. The Church, indeed, provides stepping-stones by which men of the people may climb to arbitrary power; but that has nothing whatever to do with democracy. As well call the Roman Principate democratic because many of the emperors rose from the ranks. The error arises from a careless assumption that "democratic" is the necessary opposite of "aristocratic." It is true that the Church is not aristocratic, inasmuch as the celibacy of the clergy forbids the growth of a hereditary aristocracy within its bounds. But it remains, none the less, a gigantic embodiment of Authority—of the subordination of the will and intelligence of the many to the will and intelligence of the few. Where it dallies with democracy, as in Ireland, it is not because it wants the will of the people to be free, but because it believes the will of the people to be in absolute bondage to the will of the priest.

Very similar is the case of the Protestant sectaries who, in the history of our own island, have fought against despotism. It was not democracy that they had at heart, but theocracy. Fortunately, their views on church government were democratic; and the way to pure religion, as they regarded it, lay through the restriction of the royal prerogative, which was intimately associated with prelacy and erastianism. But British self-government has really been achieved and consolidated by men who went neither to priest nor to presbyter—no, nor to the Bible—for their politics, but brought enlightened reason to the aid of a primitive racial instinct. This does not imply that they were, as a rule, irreligious men, but simply that they saw in government a function of the secular intelligence, which could derive little assistance from Scripture, and none at all from ecclesiastical tradition.

How far Christianity has been from forming and fostering any reasonable conception of democracy we may

see very clearly in its attitude towards two great social evils, entirely irreconcilable with the democratic ideal. The first of these evils—pauperism—Christianity for ages accepted as a permanent condition, rather desirable than otherwise. Against the second—slavery—it has raised but a tardy and feeble protest.

It is true that both these evils prevailed in the Greek democracies. Slavery lay at the base of the social fabric, and pauperism ensued from it. One of the injustices which undermined the Athenian empire was the application of the funds of the confederacy to enterprises designed to furnish employment for the free-born proletariat of Athens, thrown out of work by slave-holding capitalism. But this merely means that Greek democracy was a very imperfect endeavour in the direction of an ideal too distant to be quite clearly conceived even by the greatest thinkers. "The Greeks," says Professor Murray, "are not characteristically slave-holders. All the world held slaves, and had always done so. The Greeks are characteristically the first human beings who felt a doubt or scruple about slavery; who were troubled in mind by it; who thought, wrote, schemed, in the face—as far as we can judge—of absolutely over-mastering social needs, to be rid of it, some two thousand years before it was abolished in Europe...... One should remember that Athens, the most Greek part of Greece, was remarkable for her gentleness to the slave population. It was part of her democratic ideal." In other words, the essentially anti-democratic nature of the institution of slavery was recognized and deplored in Greece. It was regarded as an irremediable evil, not as a divine ordinance. And still less did any one dream of placing under the patronage of heaven the pauperism which slavery tends to engender.

Asian religion, on the other hand, has always accepted

pauperism, not only without protest, but as a providential opportunity for the acquirement of merit through alms-giving. We find this conception deeply rooted in the earliest historical ages, and it endures to this day wherever Eastern piety is uncontaminated by Western rationalism. Nay, pauperism served a double purpose: it blessed both him that gave and him that took; for the one acquired merit through liberality, the other through asceticism. The first step of the aspirant to Buddhist saintship was to refrain from all labour, set up an alms-bowl, and become a professional mendicant. The Hinduism of the present time is faithful to the same conception, and the annual tax imposed on India by her able-bodied "sannyasis" and "sadhus," who do no service whatever to the community, runs, at the most moderate computation, to many millions of rupees. The teachings of Jesus, though they discouraged self-righteous asceticism, were thoroughly oriental in their acceptance of pauperism as an inevitable feature of all social economy, and a welcome occasion for alms-giving. "The poor ye have always with you" is a simple statement of fact, the assertion of a matter of course, involving no reproach to society. The rich man, who has otherwise been righteous in all things, is adjured to "sell all that he has and distribute to the poor"—as though there would be any real gain in a momentary mitigation of the lot of a certain number of beggars, followed by the addition of another pauper to their ranks. The faithful are frequently warned of the spiritual dangers involved in riches; but there is no sign of any glimmering perception of the fact that extremes of wealth and of poverty alike result from the inequitable distribution of the products of labour. Thus the influence of the Gospel teaching has been from the beginning, and is still, hostile to the economic justice for which demo-

cracy contends, and on which the ideal democracy must be founded. Humanitarian it is, no doubt, but at the expense of human dignity; and at best its humanitarianism is inefficacious, since the "sell all thou hast" injunction is so manifestly unsound, from the economic point of view, as to be in practice a dead letter. The Church of to-day sees nothing amiss in the system under which one man takes from another almost the whole fruits of his labour, and then thinks to even things out by a largess of coals and blankets at Christmas. That is the official outcome of the precepts of Jesus, as applied to the distribution of wealth; nor can it be said that the Church has wholly misinterpreted them. The plain truth is that no sound guidance was to be expected from a teacher who regarded alms-giving as a permanently necessary and desirable social function.

It is argued—perhaps with justice—that ancient civilization would not have been possible except on a basis of slavery, which is therefore to be considered as a necessary factor in the progress of the species. If we put the argument in another form, and say that men had not sufficient wisdom to achieve civilization without the aid of this all-too-convenient instrument, we are in an unassailable position, for we are merely stating an obvious fact. We must also bear in mind that domestic slavery was not necessarily—perhaps not even commonly—an inhumane institution, and that the worst horrors of the system are apparent only where slaves are worked in gangs, under the eye, and the lash, of an overseer. There are, therefore, many plausible excuses for the fact that Christianity followed Judaism in making no protest against slavery. Such a protest would have been far in advance of the age;[1] the only odd thing is that

[1] In advance, that is, of the average opinion of the age. Greek philosophy, as we saw, had protested centuries before. "The

"inspired" teachers and writers should have possessed no knowledge or insight beyond the reach of their contemporaries. At the same time we cannot go so far as the Catholic apologist who declares that "To reproach the Church of the first ages with not having condemned slavery in principle, and with having tolerated it in fact, is to blame it for not having let loose a frightful revolution." No one blames the Church for not having suddenly and violently overthrown slavery; but it might clearly have condemned it in principle and discouraged it in practice without "letting loose" any cataclysm. The mediæval Church is credited with having brought about the substitution of villenage or serfdom for chattel slavery, and with having ultimately secured the abolition of villenage itself. I do not profess to have examined the evidence on which these claims are founded, but am strongly inclined to suspect that economic as well as spiritual forces were at work in the matter. Macaulay tells us rather quaintly that, "so successfully had the Church [in England] used her formidable machinery that, before the Reformation came, she had enfranchised almost all the bondmen in the kingdom except her own, who, to do her justice, seem to have been very tenderly treated." But if Catholicism was opposed to the forcible exploitation of one white man by another, it had certainly no objection to the enslavement of the black and brown races. Negro slavery was for centuries an established institution in Portugal. The pious Columbus sent home five hundred Indian slaves to be sold in Seville. Even the humanity

Cynics," says Professor Murray, "condemned slavery root and branch. The Stoics and certain religious organizations, from the fourth century onward, refused to recognize its existence." It was doubtless because Paul was so sure that Christian slaves would soon be free in heaven that he preached submissiveness to them on earth.

of Las Casas did not go beyond the suggestion that his countrymen, instead of enslaving the natives of America, should import slaves from Africa. Here and there, no doubt, a voice was raised against the system. Even a Pope, Leo X, is said to have declared that "not the Christian religion only, but nature herself, cries out against the state of slavery." But we have only to look at the Southern States of America to-day to see how effectively the Christian religion "cried out against" the slave trade with all its horrors, and against the institution of "servitude." When at last the shame became unendurable, and a few Christian men did begin seriously to agitate against it, they had the vast majority of Christian men, whether clergy or lay, against them. To Samuel Johnson, arrant Tory as he was, many political sins shall be forgiven in consideration of the fact that he was steadily opposed to slavery—thereby earning the grave disapproval of Boswell, who held that "to abolish a status which in all ages God has sanctioned, and man has continued, would not only be robbery to an innumerable class of our fellow subjects, but it would be extreme cruelty to the African savages." An attempt had been made early in the eighteenth century to establish the doctrine that baptism conferred liberty on negroes who accepted it; but special enactments in various British colonies denounced this heresy, and were approved by the law officers of the Crown; while a Bishop of London laid down the principle that "Christianity and the embracing of the Gospel did not make the least alteration in civil property." When the struggle began in the United States which culminated in the Civil War, the Church, to say the least of it, gave no decided lead in favour of emancipation. Almost the only sect which was irreconcilably opposed to slavery was the Society of Friends. Abolitionism was inspired

rather by a general sentiment of humanity than by specially Christian principle. It was stronger among the Unitarians of New England than in any more orthodox community. The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held at Cincinnati in 1836, condemned abolitionism, and censured two members who had addressed an anti-slavery meeting. Slavery, it was contended, was a political question with which the South alone had anything to do; and this subterfuge was so generally adopted that, says a historian of slavery, "the doors of churches and halls were closed to free discussion." The suppression of free speech showed an uneasy sense that reason was on the side of the adversary; for if the question could have been decided by Biblical authority alone, there is no doubt that the champions of slavery had the stronger case.

I am not, of course, seeking to make Christianity responsible for the fact that chattel-slavery endured until yesterday, and that the fight against wage-slavery is only now beginning. All I mean is that it has shown no insight into the nature and conditions of these crying evils, and has, on the whole, supported rather than opposed them.

In Kingsley's *Alton Locke*—a book so little read nowadays that I need not apologize for quoting from it at some length—we find a strenuous attempt to make out that Christianity is by rights the religion of freedom, constitutionalism, democracy, and that only its corruptions have worked in the opposite direction. Unfortunately, the tailor-poet's diatribes against these corruptions are by far more convincing than his later efforts to show that the true Christianity, which, after much tribulation, he believes himself to have attained, is the predestinate creed of political progress.

Alton's self-seeking and worldly cousin, who has seen

in High Church principles the path to gentility and preferment, lectures his humble relative upon his error in thinking the Church hostile to, or careless of, the well-being of the working classes. "I listened to him," says Alton, "dully and carelessly. I did not care to bring objections, which arose thick and fast, to everything he said. He tried to assure me—and did so with a great deal of cleverness—that this Tractarian movement was not really an aristocratic, but a democratic, one; that the Catholic Church had been in all ages the Church of the poor; that the clergy were commissioned by Heaven to vindicate the rights of the people, and to stand between them and the tyranny of Mammon. I did not care to answer him that the 'Catholic Church' had always been a Church of slaves, and not of free men; that the clergy had in every age been the enemies of light, of liberty; the oppressors of their flocks; and that to exalt a sacerdotal caste over other aristocracies, whether of birth or wealth, was merely to change our tyrants. When he told me that a clergyman of the Established Church, if he took up the cause of the working classes, might be the boldest and surest of all allies, just because, being established and certain of his income, he cared not one sixpence what he said to any man alive, I did not care to answer him, as I might—And more shame upon the clergy that, having the safe vantage-ground which you describe, they dare not use it like men in a good cause, and speak their minds, if forsooth no one can stop them from so doing."

This indictment Alton repeats and amplifies at a later point, with even more fervour. "Clergymen of the Church of England!" he exclaims, "look at the history of your Establishment for the last fifty years, and say, what wonder is it if the artisan mistrust you? Every spiritual reform, since the time of John Wesley, has had to estab-

lish itself in the teeth of insult, calumny, and persecution. Every ecclesiastical reform comes not from within, but from without your body...... Everywhere we see the clergy, with a few persecuted exceptions (like Dr. Arnold), proclaiming themselves the advocates of Toryism, the dogged opponents of our political liberty, living either by the accursed system of pew-rents, or else by one which depends on the high price of corn; chosen exclusively from the classes who crush us down; prohibiting all free discussion on religious points; commanding us to swallow down, with faith as passive and implicit as that of a Papist, the very creeds from which their own bad example, and their scandalous neglect, have, in the last three generations, alienated us; never mixing with the thoughtful working men, except in the prison, the hospital, or in extreme old age; betraying, in every tract, in every sermon, an ignorance of the doubts, the feelings, the very language of the masses, which would be ludicrous were it not accursed before God and man. And then will you show us a few tardy improvements here and there, and ask us, indignantly, why we distrust you? Oh! gentlemen, if you cannot see for yourselves the causes of our distrust, it is past our power to show you. We must leave it to God."

If these reproaches were just in 1850, who shall say that the intervening decades have rendered them obsolete? The actual number of democratically-minded clerics has doubtless increased; perhaps, also, their proportion to the whole ecclesiastical body; but the Church is to-day as far as it was sixty years ago from giving any general lead in the direction of democracy.

According to Alton Locke—that is to say, to Charles Kingsley in his Christian Socialist days—its inveterate Toryism was, and is, inconsistent with the teachings of its Sacred Books. When Alton got into prison he found

a Bible in his cell, and the chaplain used to read to him such portions of it as seemed suitable to his case. "But to tell the truth," says Alton, "I cared not to read or listen. Was it not the book of the aristocrats—of kings and priests, passive obedience, and the slavery of the intellect? Had I been thrown under the influence of the more educated Independents in former years, I might have thought differently. They, at least, have contrived, with what logical consistence I know not, to reconcile orthodox Christianity with unflinching democratic opinions. But such was not my lot...... I fell—willingly, alas! into the vulgar belief about the politics of Scripture, common alike—strange unanimity!—to Infidel and Churchman. The great idea that the Bible is the history of mankind's deliverance from all tyranny, outward as well as inward; of the Jews, as the one free constitutional people among a world of slaves and tyrants; of their ruin, as the righteous fruit of a voluntary return to despotism; of the New Testament, as the good news that freedom, brotherhood, and equality, once confined only to Judæa and to Greece, and dimly seen even there, was henceforth to be the right of all mankind, the law of all society—who was there to tell me that? Who is there now to go forth and tell it to the millions who have suffered, and doubted, and despaired like me, and turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come? Again I ask—who will go forth and preach that Gospel, and save his native land?"

The mature wisdom of Alton, which purports to speak in this passage, is not justified by the documents to which it appeals. Kingsley's clerical brethren might very well decline to see in the Jews a "free, constitutional people," and might with equal justice point out that the liberty, equality, and fraternity preached in the

New Testament were to be realized in heaven, not on earth. The truth is that the "inspired" speakers and writers knew no more of political science than they did of astronomy and geology, and that the attempt to find scriptural sanction for democracy was the thinnest of special pleading. The humanitarianism of the Gospels was, as we have seen, so remote from any sound economic principle that it had indirectly tended to re-inforce abuses by according a permanent sanction to alms-giving which, but for the abuses, would have found no "deserving objects." The prelate—real or legendary—who said that the Gospel precepts, taken literally, would bring society to a standstill in twenty-four hours, was much nearer the essential truth than Alton Locke or the Rev. Charles Kingsley. That is why Christian Socialism made so little mark in the world. It was an attempt to place economics under the patronage of theology, and to extract political wisdom out of the sayings and doings of people for whom politics did not exist. It was closely analogous to the heroic efforts made about the same time, by Philip Henry Gosse and others, to reconcile the data of geology and biology with the Mosaic record.

We no longer waste our energies on such efforts; and that is the great gain which the past quarter of a century has brought us. The religion of the man of to-day lives, moves, and has its being in the world revealed to us by science, not in that presupposed by a "revelation" to which the simplest facts of geography, to say nothing of less elementary sciences, were unknown. Our religion, instead of teaching us to despise man's life on earth, as a thing of no moment in itself, and a mere preparation for another state of existence, impels us to labour with all our might for the ennoblement of the human lot, and the gradual realization, as the years go on, of all the marvellous possibilities implicit in man and his terrestrial environ-

ment. We believe in making earth fair and good to live in for those that come after; and if there are any "mansions in the skies," we do not think that they are to be attained by spurning the earth and swarming up life-lines graciously let down from heaven.

Towards the making of this better world of the future, what is obviously needed is the ever-growing enlightenment of the will of man; and we believe democracy to be, of all forms of government, by far the most enlightened and enlightening. We admit all its imperfections; we admit that its workings can often be justly criticized and always amusingly caricatured. But we believe that there is this great distinction between democracy and other forms of government—that it tends to correct and cast out its own imperfections, while they have no inherent principle of development or of self-purification. For a people which has not yet reached the level of intelligence requisite for democracy, an autocracy or an oligarchy may be the best form of government attainable; but a long succession of wise and beneficent despots is a phenomenon almost unknown to history; and rarer still is an unselfish, public-spirited oligarchy. If it be said that this principle condemns the British rule in India and Egypt, I reply that that is so, if we neglect our manifest duty of educating the people of these regions for self-government. In the meantime, our autocracy is the only alternative to a much worse condition. Nor is it an unlimited, and still less a hereditary, despotism. It is an autocracy responsible to a democracy—which, however, is not sufficiently alive to its responsibilities.

Be this as it may, there is no possible means of guaranteeing enlightenment in a hereditary ruler or altruism in a caste. On the contrary, the possession of unlimited power by one man or by a few is in itself unwholesome, and tends to corrupt the man or men to whose lot it

has fallen. That democracy is the ideal form of government may almost be called a self-evident proposition. All other forms imply, for the mass of the people, a *diminutio capitis*, a more or less evident inhibition of the will, the noblest human attribute. Democracy alone aims at rendering the individual will effective in so far as it can be harmonized with other wills which have an equal right to self-realization. Thus the drawbacks of democracy lie, not in its essence, but in the gradually corrigible imperfections of its constituent factors; whereas other systems imply, in their very essence, a lowering of human dignity, a consignment of the mass of mankind to perpetual tutelage. We are bound to desire, in the abstract, that the principle of self-government should vindicate itself, since any other form of government is manifestly a second-best, a less desirable alternative, acceptable only when the nobler ideal has been proved impossible. We believe that the evidence points all the other way; that democracy will work out its own salvation, and will in due time establish itself as the organizing principle of a wiser and a lovelier world.

The religion to which we appeal for the sanction of these ideas is based neither on any tribal mythology nor on the authentication and interpretation of any sheaf of ancient manuscripts. It is a religion founded on knowledge, and trusting to ever wider, deeper, exacter knowledge for the realization of its ideals. It looks forth upon life, and finds it neither good in itself nor bad in itself, but above all things marvellous and full of unimaginable potentialities. Its one article of faith is that the world is plastic to the human will guided by the human intelligence; and it bases its hopes for the future on the undeniable fact that the human intelligence is only now beginning to come into its kingdom. Not that the future is likely to see men of greater genius

than many who have illuminated the past; on the contrary, the individual pioneers of science and philosophy will always rank, and rightly, as a race of intellectual giants. The fact remains, however, that there are now a hundred workers in the field of science for every one that could be counted a century ago, and that where there are a hundred to-day there will probably be a thousand before this century is out. The world is becoming one vast laboratory of physical and mental science; and with the enormous growth of knowledge there comes a corresponding increase in power. It is true that knowledge is not synonymous with wisdom. If it were, we should never have seen that hideous misapplication of power which is to-day leading many people to despair of the future of humanity. But such despondency is, to say the least of it, premature. The catastrophe has arisen largely from the survival of old religions into the new age; and we may fairly hope that those religions will come out of it discredited. At all events, though knowledge is not wisdom, it is the indispensable basis of wisdom. It is a very gratuitous form of pessimism to doubt that a more exact apprehension of the laws, conditions, and potentialities of the system of things of which we form part must enable the men of the future to avoid many of the tragic blunders made by the men of the past and present in pursuing their crude and uninformed ideals of human well-being. If this faith be justified—if the future of the world is destined to be wiser and happier than its past—we may be pretty sure that democracy, in one form or in many, will be its ruling principle, and will appeal for its sanctions, not to the texts of any "revelation," but to the garnered wisdom of that science of humanity which, in its present infancy, we call by the inadequate name of sociology.

CHAPTER IV

WOMAN'S MISSION

BY MARGARET McMILLAN

The part that women have played in human evolution is veiled and even lost in obscurity. We know little of the women of the remote past, as we know little of the earliest inventors. In modern books of psychology we come across inferences and suggestions that show hesitation in giving her credit for much, and yet a constraint to admit startling probabilities. "Primitive man hated work," says Ribot, for example, "and so the women must have toiled like slaves. It is possible, therefore, that the power of voluntary attention first made its entrance into the world through women." "The love of domestication of animals must have been introduced through women taking care of the young of the quarry by some chance or another." "Some knowledge of all primitive crafts must have been gained at first by woman's labour." These quotations, and many others, admit something of the race's debt to womanhood, which was discounted, of course, later, and overlaid completely by the superior external activity of the male.

Of the emotional life that sustained these early activities we know simply that it was essentially the same in all ages. Like two great rivers, we see the inner life of men and women determined throughout all ages by conditions of natural function and law that made the male active in suppressing and overcoming as well as in protecting, and assigned to women tasks and

duties that seem to lie mainly in the conservation and study of the feeble and the immature. It was not altruism that pushed her towards this order of life, but the crude facts of life and sex and the powerful instincts that are involved in these. So true is this that womanhood, while it is idealized for the race in motherhood, is still buffeted like a broken raft on a wild sea when it is torn away from the many sublimating and ennobling influences that consecrate, even for the rudest types, this close and sacred relationship.

The outstanding fact about women in rude or primitive societies is that they labour in the home and fields, give birth and nurture to children, and exhaust in these tasks their vitality and power. In highly civilized and luxurious communities the physical labour is summarily dropped, and the "lady" relieved of practically all serious work. No one can look upon this process and regard it as progressive in any sense. In spite of the much-talked-of "influence" that privileged women are said to wield, their lives indicate a kind of eclipse of every human power and every order of vital service. As for her devotion to the Churches and her timid piety, all this is often regarded as the aberration of weakness. "The cloister is her refuge," "The Church is her consolation," it is said, and there the matter is often assumed to have its end.

Nothing ends here; nothing is closed or cancelled by such apparent failure. Woman, confined more or less within the limits of home (as regards work) and of family (as regards the emotional and mental life), found the channels of life pent within a straitly confined area. No idealization of her duty, function, and influence could ever obscure this fact. When all is said and done, this fact has modified and straitened the whole life of the race as an often concealed but always present

factor. Her life-work as wife, and especially as mother, was not merely absorbing. It lent itself to a self-abandonment and exclusiveness that was less of a test than of a temptation. Self-abnegation became a lure for her, being, in effect, a yielding to all the most primitive and imperious instincts of loyalty to a lover and devotion to offspring. Civilization, while it might broaden a little her outlook in some respects, narrowed and continued to narrow for her the field of moral experiment. If, as Mr. Victor Branford has shown, the normal youth of man holds a quest as its secret mainspring, while maturity (if not barren) must find a mission, and age (if not dessicated) a pilgrimage, then the phases of woman's life are clearly marked but mercilessly circumscribed. Her quest in youth was held to be a kind of waiting for the lover who would come; a passive adventure (when, indeed, the whole matter was not taken out of her hands by her parents); and age a kind of reversion to a dessicated motherhood, in a milder, feebler form of a relationship that had visibly slipped its moorings. The mission itself—the bringing-up of children—might have shone forth between passive youth and withered age like a jewel in the sand, replete with every order of dazzling possibility. But nature is not mocked. A frost-bitten youth does not make ready for a golden summer. The motherhood of the human race is not, as a general thing, prepared for with awe and soaring hope, and also with practical foresight. The Jewish mother looked for a Messiah, holding herself through all her youth as a potential Mother of God. The Greek woman, at a certain epoch, took well-defined measures to improve the race. But in all the history of womanhood there is nothing more startling, and we may add more unnatural, than woman's passive acceptance, her blurred vision, and dim hopes in the prospect of motherhood. Here, where the

passage of dream-life to deed, of imagery and idea to embodiment and realization, is literal and living, the mothers of the race have shown, on the whole, an amazing coldness and indifference.

It is, however, in the more vigorous types that one must look for a glimpse of the truly normal, the woman that lives under the long-suppressed and, therefore, long hidden personality. And these more vigorous types found their chief outlet in the religious exercises and life of their age. Notable among these was St. Teresa of Spain, who has been called the Saint of Hystericists. Everything in her life, writings, and achievements goes to show that she was, beneath all the trappings of sixteenth-century monastic life in Spain, the type of normal and healthy womanhood. Long before she began to dream of a lover, long ere she began to please herself with frivolities like other young girls, she had dreams of a great mission. These she confided to her brother, who, being a healthy adolescent, could share them fully. Together they set off to convert the Moors (it involved a thrilling sea journey) and taste the joys of martyrdom. The spice of danger must have delighted the boy, and it delighted the maiden. They were brought back, and their young brains were doubtless seething with new visions. Teresa, however, being a girl of very good family, had no outlet at all, and found pleasure at last in frivolity, and still more, perhaps, in hiding this frivolity from her natural protectors. As she grew older the inner fires burned strongly and carried her far beyond the passive and patient attitude of waiting maidenhood assigned to her. Hers could never be a passive quest! But so little was she bound by the common desire to marry and become a mother that her desire passed sheer beyond these and demanded a higher satisfaction for its creative energy. Teresa was "con-

verted," a natural event in all normal and unarrested young humans. She loved the Highest, vowed fidelity to it, and began the great inner struggle for self-conquest and the joy of expanding life. It was an initiation attended by such novel and extraordinary happiness that not only the outer world, but all the accidents and experiences of the inner life, had a new meaning. She became a unique psychologist, penetrating into a region of mental life which makes her still a "find" for modern schools, and allows some even to fall into the mistake of classing her with neuropaths and diseased persons.

Nevertheless, the breath of a robust and jubilant energy blows through all her labours. She founded a large number of religious houses, inspired her "superiors," stimulated the culture life of many cities; became, in short, an extraordinarily effective citizen, a force not only in her own day, but throughout later centuries. All this efficiency had its fountain head in no mere personal desire or ambition. Personal ambition, so far as we can learn, was early purged away in her life of inner struggle and rapture. No better evidence can we find anywhere of the truth that every normal man *and woman* is the centre of great energies whose liberation is conditioned by a new control of primitive impulses.

It is strange that one should hark back in these modern days to the life of a Spanish nun in the sixteenth century. But one must take one's vigorous souls where one finds them, and judge of the value and nature of lives, not by their modernity, but by their fruits. Women who achieve, who spread an oasis of light and warmth around them, or even rend the darkness of human sorrow and lift many into a new life; women whose lives are full of inner struggle and great joy ("I fear nothing so much as to see my daughters lose the joy of the soul," said Teresa) may assign themselves different

duties in different epochs, but the hall-mark of success on their work is won through fidelity to principles, and even through inner processes that are the same in all ages. An inner drama that begins and ends in mere revolt against external conditions is no drama at all. That the normal event of *conversion* does take place in due time, that the individual does outlive and get beyond the impulses, desires, and ambitions of untutored and primitive life, appears to be, in all ages, the first condition of power and continuous growth. The swarming incentives and appeals of mere hungry egoism have nothing at all in common with the idealism of healthy adolescence, and mark in reality, perhaps, the discased growth that sprang where the young shoot perished.

The normal youth is "converted" (under favouring circumstances). But following on this age of dreams and idealism comes manhood and womanhood, which should each have its mission, or rather *be* a mission, as a natural and ordinary thing. What Mazzini announced ("Life is a Mission") in the rapture of civic devotion to his countrymen, and at a crucial hour, was simply a truth that is always true even though it is glimpsed only by a few and in the time of stress and strain. What one's mission is can be decided rightly only by oneself, though the Church has often given valuable help, and has refused, as well as accepted, many noviciates. But it is part of the reward of a strenuous and noble youth that guidance of a reliable kind can be won thereby. "Have the Voices deceived you?" asked Joan of Arc's executioners. "They have never deceived me," was her reply. In all ages this prize of guidance appears to offer itself to the true seeker. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise (in life's spring-time) from the dead, and Christ shall give you light!" The indecision, and even distress, of noble and normal youth is not unduly prolonged.

The restless, for ever attempting and changing, adult types that are common still, are in truth arrested types unable to emerge throughout life from adolescence.

The temptation of many, if not of most, women has met them in the home, which, being itself more or less of a cloister, had little or none of the cloister's reasoned-out discipline, ritual, and safeguards against the dangers of mere instinctive routine. It was easy to accept a mission as wife, as daughter, as sister, as mother, and to forget that these relationships do not include the whole of life; nor (in the case of three of these at least) indicate even its scope and possible influence. The great *réligieuses*, and even the smaller ones, renounced all these ties as a preliminary of doing everything else! It is lightly assumed that they did this as an act of penance, and for the winning of a heaven-to-come. But this view is too superficial to explain the facts. At the threshold of life young women learn (or may learn) that an immense force is at their disposal—to wit, the hypnotism of sex. It may be dissipated in a variety of ways. It can be used only in two ways—namely, the attraction of the lover who becomes a husband and father, or for the uplifting and regeneration of mankind. Beatrice attained this latter power by dying young and being idealized by Dante. Teresa attained to it by deliberate choice, discipline, and service. Nor are we to think that all our illustrations are to be taken from history and the records of the Saints. Here and there one finds a beautiful girl teacher whose silent influence is a hundred times more effectual than the teaching of a thousand moralists. This is one of the possible fruits of youth and beauty allied with lofty idealism. It has immense civic and racial possibilities. It is the elixir of life, all potent while preserved. And it was freely admitted as such, and allowed its exercise, in the *élite* of the cloister (though the cloister

has been too timid in entrusting it to novitiates, probably because it understood it too little to give it its proper sphere of influence). It can be used with dynamic results in human affairs; and indeed, wherever there is uncorrupted and vital progress, whether on public bodies or in homes, there we may be sure it is at work; and flowing like a white river through the strength and wisdom of many who do not even suspect its existence or know its source. And there is not the smallest doubt that it may be indefinitely increased through the unshaken loyalty of her who exercises it.

The hypnotism of sex finds its more frequent use, however, in the attractions that end in marriage and the duties of women as wives and mothers. While admitting the idealization of women that is possible and even natural through the passionate devotion of mothers and wives in all ages, one must admit that the spiritual factor in these relationships has often been subject to eclipse. The temptation is always the same—to become the mother of bodies rather than of souls. To be a good husband and father does not, and should not, exhaust the moral energies of man. To be a good mother and wife is also a part, not the whole, duty of women. As a free woman, in any case, giving but not selling herself, she has before her a thousand illustrations in history of how the lusts of the flesh do not help, but hinder, the victories of the spirit. Spiritually a king, for example, may serve his people without thought of self. But the thought of self steals in, as Mr. Victor Branford says, when he appoints his successor. His spiritual children may be, and usually are, unacknowledged at death, and do not succeed him. With mothers the pull of the flesh would be stronger. But this does not mean that they will always fail. This war, so terrible in nearly every aspect, is reassuring in one. Mothers everywhere, in

face of a great crisis, are capable of great sacrifice. The day of temptation will come when the day of stress is over. They may then forget the claims of strangers, and desire all the best (material) things for those who were once rendered capable of estimating them at their true value.

In war or peace women are custodians of a great treasure, whose value it is open to them indefinitely to raise and use not in one but in myriad ways. One cannot suppose, looking at the wastage, ruin, and misery of the world, the high death rate among children, the disease spots in great cities, the scamped education, the child labour, the widespread poverty, the brutal distinctions of class, and irreconcilable enmity of nations, that many have as yet discovered how to economize, vitalize, and finally use it in ways that will allow it to interpenetrate the whole structure of social and international life. Women are still passive in war, because they are so amazingly passive even in peace. They know even less than the old spae wives of Scotland or the priestesses of pagan nations how to bring new calming and vitalizing elements into the wavering or impetuous lives that surge around them.

Meantime public authorities are taking steps which seem to open to woman the gates of a new mission. To take one example. The Board of Education gives a grant of fourpence per day to any person or body of persons who can guarantee real nurture to a child of five and under. That is a big step in advance. Mothers in even the poorest districts will give another fourpence or thereabout. With this, and the addition of even twopence per day, the starting of a thousand baby camps or day nurseries is not difficult. In short, the public authority, by its action, *has* shifted the responsibility for child wastage on to the shoulders of the women of

Britain. There it rests now, and will rest. And even the crowding of mothers into munition works does not alter the fact. The means of salvation are in the hands of women.

Women are not yet citizens, however, with the rights of free citizens. They have no parliamentary vote. They have no voice in the election of those who can bring enormous influence to bear, if not on their inner life, at least on the means by which it can find expression. They are voteless, and therefore handicapped as men would be who had no tools, or soldiers without weapons. Such a state of things is not merely unfair. It is barbarous. The poor, sentimental, and unreasoned objections of men to women's admission to political power, in the fullest sense of the word, belong to an age when life was lived at lower levels than will be possible to-morrow. Germany has naively shown her hand on this and other questions. Her philosophy of brute force is never more emphatic and more primitive than when it disregards woman as a political factor in the State. It is in haste (that is the mark of impulse). It brooks no interruption. Why reason about a thing that requires time and self-restraint for its adequate expression, being indeed of the nature not of a massacre, but of a revelation? Feelings are out of place in business. Scruples are out of place in war. Yes. Business (as illustrated in modern social conditions) is not a very brilliant success, even when pursued with the dispassionateness of a tiger. And is War, as the Germans tell us, an indispensable factor in progress? Glancing through the red pages of history, we may admit that it achieved something *impossible otherwise in the state of mental lethargy of the women of the race.* Its great mark, however, is its *monotony* of means and baffling re-actions. Its authors move towards no new goal, approach no climax.

Massacres recur, recur, recur. The spirit of romance as well as the spirit of sacrifice illumine, indeed, the dark fields of battle, but they arrive not because men exclude women from power, but because they have not all utterly excluded or denied her.

In that new world which, we hope, will be born after the War, woman will, we trust, have a voice and vote. Her voice will not be for war; but if war is to cease, it must be, not because we have ceased to care for fighting, but because new and great goals and theatres of struggle will be opened to the whole race. Face to face at last may come the women who know much and have done little and the mothers who, knowing little in many cases about mothercraft, have ushered into the world a large family of children. The new education may begin forthwith; nor need women quit this field until they have seen the seventeen or eighteen year old youth or maiden launched on their life path.

One word about old age, or the time of pilgrimage. There have been but few great women travellers, and these few were, of course, discouraged in their generation, not, however, by those whom they visited, but by those whom they left behind. A terrible thing is that setting forth, whether it be of Paul, shipwrecked and alone in a new empire, or Columbus daring mutiny and the cold rigour of the brute forces of nature. But without travellers or pilgrims the thing we call civilization would be impossible. The planet being small, we have soon solved the problem of space. But the solution of the problems of communion and understanding of spirits is still far to seek. For that we must look to generations, not of globe-trotters (very futile kind of heralds, but heralds all the same, we hope), but of real pilgrims who set out with definite and spiritual aims. These will not look at new countries from railway-

carriage windows; still less from platforms on which they themselves are the stars and centre of interest. They will live and work in new lands, as St. Columba worked on Iona. And, be their sojourn long or short, they will enter into humane relationships with the stranger, transmuting the "strange" into something intimate and well known. To such influences rather than to treaties must we look for the new relations that will give us inestrangeable allies.

CHAPTER V

THE HUMANER SPIRIT

BY JOSEPH McCABE

IN the course of the heroic struggle, during the last generation, which centred round the basic documents of supernatural religion, Professor Huxley once used a bold and somewhat dramatic figure. The agitation and the futile activity of the clergy recalled to his mind, he said, the strange and equally vain conduct of certain lowly peoples during an eclipse of the sun. With weird noises and threatening gestures they sought to drive away the monster that robbed life of its light and colour. It seemed to him that the clergy conceived the extension over nature of a scientific scheme of interpretation much as the savages regarded an eclipse, and their efforts to combat it were not less crude and unavailing.

There were, and are, many who would, with a little change of phraseology, admit the first part of Huxley's figure. This triumph of science, they said, is in effect a triumph of darkness, not of light. You embrace life and nature in your mathematical formulæ, and at once they lose all the colour and grace they held for us. Your cold intellectualism chills all that it touches. Something very vital in man is repelled by your intellectual feast, and starved. The Greeks once devised a beautiful legend of a sculptor who fell in love with a marble statue, and, when he clasped it in his warm arms, infused life and love into it. Your science is doing the reverse, they said. It puts its cold arms about the throbbing earth,

and all the warmth and colour depart. Evidently man cannot live by intellect alone. His spirit is a bigger thing than intellect. You may logically prove that his emotional nature has no just title to be consulted, but—"it moves for all that." Look at the success of Bergsonism in the second decade of the twentieth century. Look at the vogue of Maeterlinck.

The respective and equally important parts of intellect and emotion in life cannot be discussed here; nor is it necessary. There is no such narrow intellectualism as this in the modern revolt against supernatural religion. The whole spirit of man is engaged in it. His æsthetic and moral nature is as insurgent as his intellect. The modern history of poetry alone would prove it. From the days of Goethe and Schiller, Byron and Shelley, to the days of Swinburne and Watson and Stephen Phillips, the majority of European poets have been on the side of revolt. Bergson and Maeterlinck themselves are rebels against the old religious traditions.

But there is a far broader and more conspicuous proof that the whole being of man is involved in this great emancipation—that his moral no less than his intellectual nature has felt and resented the bondage of the old traditions. One cannot, indeed, understand how any man ever came to regard science as the sole or chief expression of the modern demand of growth or progress; except that the advance of science more openly and dramatically conflicted with the old ideas, while these other manifestations of a new spirit seemed for a long time to be reconcilable with them. Every other power of man, every aspect of his mind, has grown in the same proportion as his intellect, and this great growth has made him in every sense dissatisfied with the old charts of life. Science is not the greatest phenomenon of modern times. It is the vast, pervasive, all-conquering

idealism of the modern spirit that makes our age great in the eye of the liberal historian. The nineteenth century inherited an appalling legacy of "problems," and not the least significant part of the matter is that earlier ages hardly even perceived that they were bequeathing to us any problems at all. The social and moral condition of England even one hundred years ago was lamentable, and not the least lamentable part of it was that so few people knew it. The work that has been done during the last hundred years in assailing and solving those problems is stupendous.

A hundred years ago men worked commonly sixty or seventy hours a week, for a wretched wage, in insanitary conditions, and were truculently prevented from combining to improve their lot. Now they work less than fifty hours a week, their wage is doubled, the conditions of the workshops are sternly controlled, and they have an immense power of collective action. A century ago they lived in drainless and windowless cellars, rarely went more than a few miles from home, had little recreation beyond drink and dogfights, were unable to read, had not the slightest voice in the national administration of their affairs, and often ended their lives in a bleak and degrading poor-house or in an elementary type of hospital. The transformation, for the great majority of the workers, has been magical. A hundred years ago children began to work at the age of seven or eight, and were mercilessly exploited by avaricious employers; now they have free and handsome schools, devoted and skilful tuition, parks, and playgrounds until they are properly developed. A hundred years ago women were oppressed and slighted; now they have personality and a beginning of power. A hundred years ago jails were hotbeds of fever, Parliament was the property of a few landowners, colleges and universities were rigorously closed against

the son of the worker, the hope of abolishing war had hardly dawned in the brains of prophets, and gambling, drunkenness, and immorality were national characteristics, from the Regent down to the ploughman. Somehow there has come over this old England a spirit as gentle and welcome as the breath of spring; a spirit that found its way into cottage and palace, jail and workhouse, church and theatre, inn and workshop, nursery and school—that championed all that were weak and ill-treated, even the uncomplaining animal, and tore the whip from the hands of the cruel.

That seems the greatest achievement of the nineteenth century—indeed, the greatest achievement of history, for I know no period in the whole chronicle of man's doings that witnessed even an approximately equal advance. And the real significance of it was for a time masked by the very plausible assurance that it was merely a belated appreciation of the principles of the older creeds. It was then thought that these principles were peculiar to Christianity, and it was not noticed that the long failure to carry them into life was really a very definite and significant fact. Wilberforce and Elizabeth Fry and Shaftesbury were certainly not more Christian than Thomas Aquinas and Francis of Assisi. It is now suggested that they were more Christian because they more faithfully worked out the implications of the old creed. But precisely what we want to know is, why men and women of fine character brooded over the Gospels for a thousand years without seeing those implications, and what it was that made the difference in the Christian reformers of the nineteenth century.

The plain truth was, of course, that a new thing was born in Europe—humanism. Some fertilizing influence was introduced into the mind. The creed remained the same; it was the mind that changed, and this change

was certainly not due to any superior penetration in working out the logical consequences of the creed. At that task the Schoolmen were far more skilful than modern divines. What the new principle was might have been apparent from the first to a candid observer. When Mirabeau worked side by side with the Abbé Grégoire, when Robert Owen co-operated with English Quakers and Churchmen, it was clear that something deeper than creeds united them. "We admire your practices, but we abominate your principles," said a clergyman to Owen; and, if Owen had been capable of discourtesy, he would probably have returned the compliment. The new spirit of man was fermenting in them all. Mazzini, a devout theist, later shocked Christians by saying: "The watchword of our age is Humanity."

Little as they were disposed to admit it, the Christians were really proceeding on the same principle. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you" is a simple humanitarian counsel, not a supernatural command. It is a law of the health of this living polity of men. Its only defect is that it is really not a golden rule. The great social reformers of the early nineteenth century—Christians like Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, or Freethinkers like Owen and Place—were not doing unto others what they had any practical trust of receiving from others. They were nearly all prosperous men and women, needing nothing from anybody, helping those who could not help themselves or anybody else. Bentham's principle of the greatest good of the greatest number was, in effect, the same thing as the Golden Rule of the Gospels. But underneath both, vivifying and transfiguring them, there was now a new and deep sympathy with suffering.

It became gradually apparent that this new spirit was, not merely not born of the old dogmas, but very much

opposed to them. Many of our neighbours would ask us to distinguish between what they call fundamental Christianity and the dogmas which a later age had built on it. It is certainly a poor type of mind that cannot appreciate and retain fine sentiments that found expression in the old religion merely because they happen to be in the old religion: as poor a type as the mind that thinks that what Christ said *must* be superior to what Plato said or Epictetus said. But the distinction is not very relevant. The religion of Christ himself was intensely supernatural, and was on that account humanly harsh and impracticable at times. Indeed, modern scholarship, even theological scholarship, is making it plainer than ever that "the simple teaching of the Gospels" was quite unfitted to generate social idealism. Its fundamental principle was the belief, borrowed from the Persians, that the social order would very soon be swallowed up in the end of the world, and then there would be a general judgment and sorting out of those who were to burn for ever in a lake of fire. This belief was very well fitted to inspire a most intense zeal for individualistic virtue and asceticism, but not social enthusiasm.

Now, it was on this fundamental and original gospel, not so much on the mediæval doctrine of sacraments and Trinity, and so on, that the modern spirit turned with some impatience. The doctrine of eternal torment, most Christians now admit, was frankly barbaric. Some are so eager to save the prestige of Christ from the reproach of having entertained it that they wrestle with the Greek text as ingeniously, and just as fallaciously, as mediæval Schoolmen or early Reformers. These efforts are quite futile, but one may observe that it is the very principle of retribution, not so much the duration of the punishment, that the modern spirit resents. The mis-

chief of such a principle, of the harsher principles of the old creed generally, is painfully illustrated in the last phase of Carlyle's development. His *Latter-Day Pamphlets* are a dreadful and instructive monument of the old order of inspiration; and we could have no finer illustration of the truth for which I am contending. Literally, he dashes like a mad bull into the new groups of social reformers. Jails shall not be reformed; niggers shall not be protected from the lash; the poor shall not be coddled; workers shall not have votes, and so on. All this new "patent treacle," as he calls modern philanthropy, is not only against "the eternal verities"; it is a contemptuous disregard of the example of the Almighty. His language is but a conscious articulation of the silent indifference of earlier ages.

Against this habit of thought the modern spirit revolted. Science and philosophy—intellectual culture generally—had little to do with it. The new spirit of sympathy begot new moral standards, and they were entirely inconsistent with the old. It is not by reason that we discover that the doctrine of a condemnation of the whole race for the sin of one human pair is a degrading legend; it is not by instinct or intuition. The notion outrages our moral and humane standards. It is not by reason that we are persuaded to reject the doctrine of eternal punishment. This was the revolt of the other part of modern man, growing larger together with intellect, feeding on its own early philanthropies.

These two were outstanding and essential parts of the old creed, and the revolt against them led men further: as John Hampden had been led on from a refusal to pay ship-money, or as the Bostonians had been led on from a rejection of the tea-tax long before. The modern spirit perceived that the whole supernaturalist scheme was no longer tenable. It is petty and foolish, and psychologi-

cally impossible, to separate the parts in this revolt of reason and sentiment. The activity of man is one, not a bundle of "faculties," as people used to think; and his whole being was simultaneously growing. Yet the part of moral and humane sentiment was great. We discovered that the counterpart of the doctrine of retribution, the belief in an eternal reward, was equally wrong. It was not merely the monstrosity of making this reward depend on the accident of having been baptized, or having heard the Christian faith, or having entirely correct beliefs about it, or having had the ministration of a priest in the hour of death, that repelled us. These may be mediæval sophistications, though some of them are far earlier than the Middle Ages. But the principle was unethical in itself. Good conduct on such a motive was not an expression of character, but a prudent speculation. Then we saw that coercion for heresy was wrong; that all premiums on sound belief were wrong; that the weekly and daily flattering of the Almighty in churches was wrong; that the idea of "chosen peoples" was wrong; that the determination to make Christianity supernatural had led men into gross injustice towards all other religions, living and dead. So the spirit enlarged until we saw the ministers of sects which once burned to burn each other meet on common platforms, and even take part in a "Parliament of Religions."

All this is good. The historian may be granted a little genial irony when he contrasts the present and the past, but it does not prevent him from appreciating the change. What is even more important is that it has imposed a sense of social duty on the Churches themselves. The fact that they have been so slow to take up social work, that it was left to laymen for decades, that in the earlier and more difficult days they persecuted

socially-minded clergymen like Joseph Rayner Stephens and Kingsley, does not much commend their claim that all this philanthropy really came of *their* principles. We may overlook all that, except when the extravagance of their claims compels us to recall it.

But the evolution is not completed. It is widely felt that the management or betterment of this planet would be better dissociated altogether from supernaturalist principles. The belief that the poor will have a rich reward in heaven has not, as Ruskin long ago pointed out, tended to stir people to abolish poverty. The belief that wars do a nation "spiritual good," as so refined a clergyman as Mr. Campbell is saying, does not augur well for the peace of the world. The very candid confession of many religious people that, in engaging in social work, they are trying to lure democracy back to the Church, is not attractive. There is a growing feeling that supernaturalism may be left to the academic intellect. Conduct and reform had better proceed on human considerations only. *One World at a Time* is the title given by a New York clergyman (Mr. Slicer) to his book. It is a very good motto. Worlds are large and absorbing things.

In fine, it is well to reflect how this great contribution of humane sentiment to the modern revolt against supernatural religion is the natural culmination of an historical development. Every civilization reaches that stage in time. China reached it under Kung-fu-tse. The brilliant civilization of Athens reached it almost at once. Rome came to it after a few centuries of complete civilization. Then the night of the Middle Ages fell, and, although a similar development was clear in some of the preserved Hebrew books—where Greek influence touched the old Hebraism—men failed to see that the philosophy of the "Wisdom Books" was, like the philosophy of the Stoics,

the last and best word. They were regarded as apocryphal, or at least as suspicious.

So the long travail of the human mind had to begin again; and it began as soon as the chaotic barbarism of the early Middle Ages was shamed into some degree of intellectual activity and refinement of feeling by the Spanish Mohammedans. Even in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries heresy spread luxuriantly, almost as far as Rome. In the Christian chronicles of the time these Cathari and Waldensians and Albigensians are, of course, darkly described, but it is clear that, apart from some old and heterodox speculations about the universe, they stood for high conduct and humane feeling. They were brutally suppressed, but their spirit lived; as the spirit of Abélard and Arnold of Brescia and other rebels lived. Then came William of Ockham and Marsiglio of Padua, then Wickliffe and Hus, and Erasmus and the Renaissance, and Luther and Zwingli. The theological struggle, which was necessary in order to break the power of Rome, which had bloodily suppressed the earlier revolts, diverted men's minds and feelings for a time, and the religious wars that followed postponed all cultural development. The new spirit was, however, only enfeebled, and in the eighteenth century it began the last triumphant advance. Even in the last phase we see the historical law verified. In its earlier stages the intervals of reaction (say, 1816 to 1832) were longer and more violent. Reaction has now to disguise itself in humanitarian garments, like a mediæval Jesuit dressed as a Swedish merchant or a Hindu priest. The struggle is not over, but the new spirit has, like democracy, gained its citizenship and will yet rule.

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATIONAL IDEALS

BY PROFESSOR J. S. MACKENZIE, M.A., LL.D., LITT.D.

IN order to understand the ideals by which recent reformers in education have been guided, it is necessary to refer to different ways in which education has been conceived. Most of our modern ideals are not altogether new, but are rather reversions to older conceptions. But it is possible for modern educators to bring together different conceptions, and so to apply them in a less one-sided way. There are three main conceptions of the aim of education, which may be described as the individual, the social, and the religious view. When rightly understood, they are not opposed to one another; for the individual is by nature social, and the ultimate aim of society is religious.

The individual view is the one that corresponds most closely to the common interpretation of the meaning of the word, as implying an attempt to draw out the powers that are latent in the child. This view was specially emphasized by Socrates, who refused the title of Teacher and took as his aim the eliciting from men's minds, and especially from the minds of the young, what they really mean and aim at. Rousseau also laid stress on this conception; and it has recently been eloquently defended by Mr. Holmes, and effectively applied by the followers of Madame Montessori and others. Education, from this point of view, is essentially growth, and has to begin with the study of the child's individual nature.

According to the social view, the aim of education is the making of the citizen. In the work of its best representatives, of course, it does not ignore the individual view. Plato, for instance, urged that we have to begin by ascertaining the natural gifts of each individual, and by allowing them to unfold themselves freely; but we have next to ask how these gifts can be best employed in the service of the community to which he belongs. The French sociologist, Durkheim, describes education as a "new birth," in which the social man is created, in place of the purely individual man. It is the initiation of the individual into the life of the society of which he is a part. He learns its language, becomes familiar with its institutions, adapts himself to its customs, and enters into the spirit of its aims and activities. This view has very largely influenced recent attempts at educational reform.

Religion may be taken to mean devotion to the eternal values—*i.e.*, to Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. Now, it is no doubt true, as Socrates urged, that the effort after these is implicit in the consciousness of every sane individual; and it is also true that they are to some extent recognized in the laws and in the life of every well-ordered community. But often they are not clearly apprehended and appreciated either by individuals or by societies; and hence it becomes important to give special emphasis to them in the work of education. Churches and religious teachers, as well as those who are specially devoted to science or to art, have always felt this; and in most systems of education there is an effort made, at some point, to cultivate the love of truth and beauty for their own sakes, and to develop the finer qualities of character, without reference to their immediate utility in the life of a particular community. One of the best representations of education, from this point of view, is

that which is given by Goethe in *Wilhelm Meister*, where the cultivation of various forms of reverence is emphasized as the most important aspect of education. It was also taught in a striking way by Plato, though perhaps too exclusively as part of the education of a particular class. It is with this ideal of education that we are here more particularly concerned.

Now, it is very obvious that there is no real opposition between these views; and probably every serious student of education would recognize them all as being true and important. But it is easy to emphasize one to the detriment of the others. The second view—which is, on the whole, the most obvious interpretation of what education in general seeks to do—is perhaps the one that is most liable to abuse. Education is a social institution, generally organized to a considerable extent by the State; and hence the immediate needs of a particular community are in some danger of being unduly stressed. In many countries the cultivation of patriotism is taken as one of the principal aims of education. So far as this means an attempt to understand the life of the community in which we live, to appreciate the self-devotion of its members and the contributions that they have made to the progress of civilization throughout the world, one can readily see that it is of great value. But if it serves to promote the spirit of devotion to one's country, whether right or wrong, and of antagonism to other nations, it can hardly be commended. Apart from this, the purely civic conception of education is apt to mean the preparation of the young for their special vocation in life, without reference to the larger interests of humanity. The higher interests then come to be regarded as the luxury of the few. Even Plato is open to some criticism in this respect, though the general spirit of his treatment makes it comparatively easy to correct his errors. Most

people who are interested in education at all would now recognize that it is important, not merely for the few, but for every member of a community, to be not only fitted for the performance of some special function, but also for the appreciation of the larger ends at which human beings aim.

As we have already noted, the ultimate ends at which human beings aim are conveniently summed up by the terms Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. In their most complete meaning, the three can hardly be separated. Truth, in the fullest sense, may be taken to mean the apprehension of reality in a connected way; beauty, a perfect order that gives us pure satisfaction without alloy; goodness, the love of truth and beauty, and striving to attain them; and that striving, in its most perfect form, would seem to be itself beautiful. Hence the Greeks tended to use the single term τὸ καλόν for the ultimate end at which we aim. Now, the higher forms of religion at least are concerned with this ultimate end. "O world, as God has made it!" exclaims Browning—

> All is beauty;
> And knowing this is love; and love is duty.

It might be better to say "hoping for this, and striving to make it so," rather than "knowing this." Truth and beauty, in the most complete sense of these terms, are perhaps unattainable by man. We apprehend only partial truths and imperfect forms of beauty. The conception of our world as a completely intelligible system remains for us an object of faith, and perfect beauty is the object of a hope or aspiration. Hence goodness, of which the essence is love, may be held, as St. Paul said, to be for us the greatest of the three. Now, it is with education, as dealing with these ultimate ends, that we are here concerned.

The love of truth is, of course, to some extent cultivated

in all systems of education. The greater part—possibly an excessive part—of the teaching in most schools and colleges is concerned with the acquisition of various kinds of knowledge. How far this process leads to a love of truth, depends no doubt very largely on the skill and enthusiasm of the teacher; but, if the teaching is at all successful, it must lead to it in some degree. It is possible that the telling of fairy tales to young children is sometimes carried to such an excess as to create a certain tendency to prefer fiction to truth. Many recent educators think that "the fairy tales of science" might be utilized rather more than they are. In the teaching of history, also, there is apt to be a certain amount of perversion of truth, sometimes in the interests of patriotism, sometimes in those of particular creeds or political parties, sometimes in those of the romantic and picturesque. Attempts are being made to remedy this; and some are trying to bring about a more perfect co-ordination of different kinds of knowledge, so as to make possible a general outlook on the world as a connected whole. The cultivation of the love of the beautiful is also recognized as an object of some importance in most modern conceptions of education, as it was by Plato. Music and some of the rudiments of drawing have usually had some place; and the reading of good poetry has always been found efficacious. Perhaps it is at the higher end of our educational systems that there is most deficiency in this respect. It is probable that the study of architecture and other forms of fine art might well have a more conspicuous place—too often they have no place at all—in our university courses; and æsthetics might be more fully recognized as an important aspect of philosophy. Also, the places in which educational work is carried on are often not as beautiful as they might be made. These considerations

also are now beginning to be more prominently brought forward.

It is with goodness that we are more particularly concerned. Truth and beauty, in any complete sense of the terms, are not attainable by the great majority of the human race, if indeed they can properly be said to be attainable by any; whereas there are no real limits to the possibility of goodness; and its attainment, in the highest degree in which it can be achieved, is an essential for all. If, however, we are right in believing that goodness means essentially the love of what is true and beautiful and the strenuous effort to realize them, what is achieved in education in the cultivation of these objects must carry us some way towards the promotion of what we aim at. But only some way. It is possible to acquire a considerable amount of knowledge of various kinds, and to be genuinely interested in it, without having any very eager devotion to truth in general; and a similar remark may be made about the appreciation of beauty. Three things are needed: (1) That our particular acquirements in knowledge and appreciation should lead us to some more or less clear outlook on the world, and especially on human life; (2) that we should realize that what we have acquired is not simply an individual possession, but something that has importance for the advancement of human life; (3) that the realization of this should lead to active efforts to promote that advancement by any means that are in our power. Each of these aspects calls for further notice.

(1) A general outlook on the world may be given by philosophy, by poetry, or by religion. Philosophy, in any definite sense, belongs to the later stages of education. It is possible that some elements of it might with advantage be introduced at an earlier stage than is common among the English-speaking peoples, and that it

might have a more prominent place than is commonly assigned to it at the later stages. In France and Japan a good deal has been done recently in this direction. But it is clear that it could not be made very conspicuous at the earliest stages. Poetry may be made more serviceable; but the deeper kinds of poetry are almost as difficult to appreciate as philosophy—if not, even, in many cases more so. Hence teaching of a definitely religious kind—involving, that is, a more or less clearly formulated creed—has tended to take a prominent place for the purpose that is here in view. The objections to this are pretty obvious. Most religious creeds are really as difficult to understand as philosophical theories, and have the additional disadvantage of having to be accepted without definite proof, and without much relation to the other knowledge that is being acquired. These objections would apply even if we were concerned with the creed of an infallible Church. Among the English-speaking peoples at least, there is the further objection that it is generally recognized that no creed can be accepted in this absolute way, and that there is no agreement as to the best method of formulating a tentative creed. Hence it would seem that it must be left largely to the individual teacher—guided, of course, by those who are responsible for his training and by books specially dealing with this problem—to determine the best way of providing those entrusted to his care with a provisional outlook on the world. What is chiefly wanted is an attempt to sum up the most fundamental conceptions of science, the most striking utterances of sages, and the most important results of historical development. There is coming to be a more general recognition that this should be done as impartially and undogmatically as possible; that it is not the business of general education to make proselytes in matters that are controversial; and that it is not in

accordance with educational principles to impose doctrines, whether scientific, political, literary, or theological, without being able to furnish and examine the evidence on which they rest.

(2) The next thing that is important is that we should place ourselves at the social point of view. The study of history and literature, and, in a less degree, other studies as well, have always been of some assistance here. Much may also be accomplished by the general life of a school or college, and more and more stress is being laid on this. Recent experiments, such as the Little Commonwealth, the Boy Scout movement, etc., point to various ways in which the social sense may be practically cultivated. Attempts are also being made to direct more definite attention to the structure of the society in which we live. It is felt that the functions of different social institutions should be explained by degrees, so as to make apparent how they help (and also, in some cases, how they may tend to hinder) the general advancement of human life. Much of this, no doubt, can only be done satisfactorily after the school age. Attempts have been made to further this end by regional surveys and other methods of popular education. Facts connected with the life of the family have special importance in this connection; and many now hold strongly that some of the most important considerations relating to this—especially those concerned with sex-relationships—should be dealt with carefully at an early stage.

(3) Finally, it is more and more recognized that the insight thus acquired should not remain merely a matter of contemplative interest, but should issue in efforts to promote the advancement of everything that is true or beautiful, or that may be recognized as a means for the realization of these. It is here that we come to the problem of what is most definitely described as Moral

Education; which is certainly one of the most difficult and controversial aspects of education in general, and also one to which very special attention has recently been given. It is generally recognised that moral education may be partly indirect and partly direct; that what is direct may be partly incidental and partly systematic, and that what is systematic may be partly of a definitely practical and partly of a more reflective kind.

Every aspect of genuine education has some tendency, in an indirect way, to promote goodness. The love of truth is more or less promoted by all kinds of real knowledge. A good deal of emphasis has recently been laid on the view that this is especially likely to be the case when the knowledge is not passively received, but gained by some degree of individual effort. Hence experiments, problems, composition, research, and constructive work in general are being more and more encouraged. Diligence, method, patience, and perseverance may also be cultivated by any kind of study; and it has been recognized that even games may be used to cultivate courage, loyalty, and public spirit. History and literature serve, even more directly, to bring out the importance of many of the virtues. It is evident, however, that the results reached in this way are somewhat haphazard, and more direct methods have consequently been sought.

Direct methods may be incidental. Faults may be punished and merits encouraged by various methods of school discipline; and this kind of teaching may be accompanied by words of reproof, exhortation, or commendation. Discourses of a more general kind may also be given, as occasion arises, with a more or less direct bearing upon conduct. Such methods are often very effective, but they depend rather too much on chance opportunities. They generally appeal, also, to a large extent, to what have been described as political or social

sanctions—*i.e.*, to reward or punishment, or to what is generally approved or condemned—rather than to the pupil's own perception of what is honourable or base. Sanctions, and especially punishment (most of all corporal punishment), have been largely discredited in theory, and to a considerable extent in practice. Hence the need has been felt for methods of a more systematic kind.

These more systematic methods may be primarily of a practical character. Some of the methods that have already been referred to as being used for the development of the social sense may be systematically used to cultivate habits of good action. Children may be got to play at being an organized community, as in the Little Commonwealth, or at being Knights Errant, as in the Boy Scout movement; or in some other practical way be led to do noble deeds, instead of dreaming them or hearing them described. It would be difficult, however, to apply such methods universally; and there are some important aspects of life that they could hardly touch. Even their most enthusiastic supporters seem to recognize that they have to be accompanied by teaching of a more formal kind.

Thus many educational reformers have been led to believe that some reflective consideration of the qualities that it is specially desirable to cultivate forms an essential element in moral education. It is here that the work of the Moral Education League[1] has been specially important. Its task has not been a light one. How this element of systematic instruction should be introduced, how much time should be given to it at different ages and in different types of school, how it should be illustrated and brought home to different classes of children reared in

[1] Now known as the Civic and Moral Education League.

different environments, are difficult problems that can only be very gradually solved. Yet much has been accomplished. Carefully graduated syllabuses have been prepared by the League, and widely accepted by Education Authorities. Model lessons have been given by Mr. F. J. Gould in various parts of the world, and others of a somewhat different type by several educationists in particular places. Text-books have also been issued; and a considerable literature has grown up dealing with different aspects of the subject. The elaborate Reports, edited by Dr. Sadler, have shown what is being done in many countries. The Congresses in London and at The Hague were attended by representatives of the most diverse views, and much has been learned from this interchange of opinions. Public interest has thus been aroused, and its effects have been seen in a more and more definite recognition, especially in the Education Codes,[1] of the importance of this aspect of education.

[1] [The following paragraphs appear since 1906 in the Code of the Board of Education :—

"Moral Instruction should form an important part of every Elementary school curriculum. Such instruction may either (1) be incidental, occasional, and given as fitting opportunity arises in the ordinary routine of lessons, or (2) be given systematically and as a course of graduated instruction.

"The subject of this instruction, whether given by the methods indicated in (1) or in (2) above, should be on such points as courage, truthfulness, cleanliness of mind, body, and speech; the love of fair play, gentleness to the weaker, humanity to animals, temperance, self-denial, love of one's country, and respect for beauty in nature and in art.

"The teaching should be brought home to the children by reference to their actual surroundings in town or country, and should be illustrated as vividly as possible by stories, poems, quotations, proverbs, and examples drawn from history and biography.

"The object of such instruction being the formation of character and habits of life and thought, an appeal should be made to the feelings and the personalities of the children. Unless the natural moral responsiveness of the child is stirred, no Moral Instruction is likely to be fruitful."

Many Education Authorities have been moved to introduce definite moral lessons in the schools under their charge; and some Training Colleges are giving more attention to the preparation of teachers for work of this kind. The last point is specially important. It is evident that the success of the movement must depend mainly on securing the right kind of teachers, with a genuine conviction of its value, and with the insight and sympathy that it so emphatically needs. With this secured, it is felt that difficulties about Time Tables and other minor details would speedily disappear. The co-operation of parents is, of course, also an important consideration, to which attention is being directed.

On the whole, there is great reason to hope that the ideals of different educational reformers are beginning to converge. They all recognize, at any rate, that the creation of good citizens is of supreme importance for national and international life. The present crisis has impressed this on almost every one's mind, and it is not likely to be soon forgotten. Different countries, as well as different schools of thought, may be expected to be more ready to learn from one another in the future. There is still a good deal that is chaotic in education, but the right lines of advance are becoming more and more apparent.

In the Preparatory Memorandum to the Code for 1906 it is declared as "desirable that where systematic teaching of this subject is practicable, such teaching should be direct, systematic, and graduated."

The Moral Education League (6 York Buildings, Adelphi, London, W.C.) was primarily responsible for the introduction of the subject of Moral Instruction in the Code, and was founded by the Union of Ethical Societies.—EDITOR.]

CHAPTER VII

TOWARDS HUMAN SOLIDARITY

BY S. K. RATCLIFFE
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THERE can be few more suggestive ways of approach to the understanding of the human pilgrimage than a study of the highroads of the early world. And I suppose that the first surprised thought of the inquirer is apt to be, not What an empty world it was and how isolated its separate peoples! but rather, What an amazing being is man, and with what daring and resource he has always made and maintained contact with his kind! Along those immemorial tracks of the Mediterranean basin, across the Near and Middle East, over the highlands of Central Asia, went the soldier, the hunter, the trader, the scholar, the missionary of ideas. None can tell what Greece and Egypt knew or did not know of Persia and India, or how close the relations were before the conquering Turk flung his weight across the motherlands of Western civilization. The wonder is, not that the peoples of the ancient world were remote from one another, but that they touched one another so often and at so many points; that, against all obstacles, man made his way continuously to the frontiers of the habitable world.

Yet it remains true that a cardinal difference between the ancient world and the modern lies in this matter of movement and communications. After the ages of the great flights of peoples into the more fertile regions of

the earth, it was the rare and enterprising individual who journeyed. He went in search of knowledge or adventure or wealth, while his fellows stayed at home to labour and replenish the earth. It has been reserved for us of the industrial epoch to resume the migratory habit. The pioneer has opened up almost unbounded new lands, and, in consequence, the past century has seen the creation of great new nations—the British Dominions, the Colonies of Africa, and that greatest of all modern marvels, the United States. As individuals, again, we travel endlessly, incessantly, while the vast complex of our developed society has made each one of us a citizen of the globe.

The average man of the modern age is in the enjoyment of an immeasurable heritage. Creation has in an extraordinary sense widened to his view. By comparison with the experience of the ordinary person to-day, the greatest intelligences of the ancient world, or of any age preceding the nineteenth century, lived in a contracted universe. To Plato, or Dante, or Leonardo da Vinci, the realm of imagination and idea was a sphere of infinite light and variety; but how meagre, by comparison, their knowledge of the earth they lived upon and their contact with its multitudinous life! Francis Bacon could without undue arrogance take all knowledge for his province, because in fact it was quite reasonably possible for a single mind to survey the greater part of it. To-day the most capacious intelligence is lost as a child amid the riches of the sea-shore. The contemporary universe has been opened to us. The patient research of scholarship into early society and thought has made us free of a hundred vanished civilizations. The changing speech, the infinite folk-ways of mankind, have yielded up their secret. The record remains, and its testimony is sure. "Myths are truer than history; language cannot lie."

The science of comparative religion has laid bare a wide and wonderful world. Knowledge has brought tolerance and sympathy. Fear of the unknown was the mark of the pre-scientific era; and it led men and women, and their leaders in Church and State, into terrified condemnation of societies and beliefs which were beyond their ken. For that attitude of suspicion and terror we have substituted an all-comprehending curiosity and a readiness to learn from every quarter.

The exchange of knowledge leads to the interchange of ideals. Progressively, and with astonishing rapidity, the East has been absorbing and applying the experience of the West. The reconstruction of Japan, the awakening of China, the gradual transforming of India under British direction, constitute a revolution such as the world has never known before. So far it looks as though the balance of the past were being redressed. Hitherto, from age to age, Asia has conquered Europe; henceforth, it may be, the peoples of Asia are destined, at all events in matters of government and social organization, to take the impress of the European system. Mr. Lowes Dickinson, indeed, contends that, to all intents and purposes, the West has already won.[1] European influences —intellectual, industrial, economic—are irresistible; in China and Japan they find a soil perfectly prepared for their reception; and, according to this reading, the essential East can manage to survive only among certain classes of the Indian people with whom an unworldly conception of life and the universe is the breath of being.

It would not, of course, be accurate to say that the movements of thought and advancing society had already achieved the result of making mankind a unity. To claim so much would be to utter a blank absurdity in

[1] See *An Essay upon the Civilizations of India, China, and Japan;* 1915.

these days when Europe is gasping in the abyss, and when one half of the world is inclined to look with suspicion and affright upon the possible devastation which may be wrought by the other half as the result of the exhaustion of Europe. Nevertheless, it is palpably true that the influences of a century have brought results in this regard transcending all that the slow movement of the previous ages had accomplished. The catastrophe of the present blinds our eyes to what had already been secured. In the misery and chaos of the moment we remember with difficulty how far, to all seeming, the civilized peoples had travelled towards a common standard of society and behaviour. Our habit of taking for granted every convenience of the modern world (until the dislocation of war comes to remind us that it is removable) tends to obscure our sense of the results attained through the extension of mechanical communication. Yet we know that since the invention of printing every stage in the organization of knowledge has brought us nearer to the welding of humanity into a conscious whole.

If the aim of the influences which we group as the forces of social progress is to make the spiritually conscious man or woman everywhere at home (and it is not easy to improve on the definition), it is undeniable that our advance was becoming, before the summer of 1914, extraordinarily thorough; and that was the reason of our rejoicing and hope. But the movement had, as we all recognize, certain incidental results which we are bound to acknowledge as unfortunate. The exchange of spiritual and material forces is the splendid fact of the modern system; but, unavoidably, it goes along with the standardization of society and the acceptance of a common rule in externals, a rule which appears incompatible with the retention of the fine and picturesque exuberance of the earlier stages of development. Our

cities and all their institutions tend to become alike. A public department or representative chamber in London is not noticeably different from one in Rome or Stockholm, or, for that matter, in Tokyo, except in degrees of folly or efficiency. The railway, the hotel, the club, the post office, the church, present no very marked dissimilarities. England and Scandinavia, Turkey and Japan, study and reproduce the organizations of Germany or the United States. Educational envoys convey from Central Europe to every country of the world the forms of instructional torture. The standardized school appears in Brittany and Finland, in India and Ireland and the Gaelic Hebrides; and at its appearance the brilliance and variety, the colour and romance of indigenous culture and tradition flee away. In their place come uniformity and unified intelligence, method, experiment, and that admirable average which, however we phrase it in theory, appears to be the aim and justification of the associated effort to which we are all committed.

This, however, is part of the unavoidable price to be paid. Mankind cannot advance into another order of society without giving up many things that are surrendered with regret. And, after all, our hopes for the future are based upon the solid gains of a period rich in humane and spiritual results. Apart from the growth during the recent past in understanding and tolerance, education and social service, consider, as a single illustration, that wonderful quickening of the civic sense which has been the distinguishing characteristic of our own time—especially, perhaps, in the United States. Those who see in America only the latest and most brutal system of industrialism, backed by a population given over to material aims, have formed their conception without reference to the deep and far-spreading movements of the past two decades. It is true, of

course, that the vast influx of immigrants from Central and Southern Europe has imposed upon the United States a social problem of unexampled difficulty—a problem not to be got rid of by the adoption of Mr. Roosevelt's easy formula of speedy and thorough Americanization. If we assume (what is by no means certain) that at the close of the War Europe will not have much surplus population to send across the Atlantic, it will take the Republic a long time to absorb and Americanize her Europeans, and the process cannot be completed without misery and tragedy on a large scale. But even so, it should be remembered, the immigrant stream brings rich elements of tradition and personality into the Western democracy, and these will be of inestimable value in shaping the society of to-morrow. Very many Americans, regarding the spiritual results of the War upon the belligerent peoples, have persuaded themselves that nothing but a similar experience can make a unity of the United States. This, surely, is a deeply despairing conclusion. The losses of the War, let us hope, are going to be partially compensated, for all the nations, by the accession of new forms of consciousness and strength. But should not all patriotic Americans hold that the social discipline which, since the outbreak of the War, has appealed to so large a multitude of thoughtful people as the greatest communal good, is attainable through the pursuit of the American ideal —which is the ideal of constructive and pacific democracy? Certainly a survey of the results already attained would seem, to a sympathetic outsider, to encourage that belief. America as a country is extraordinarily young. It is only half-a-century since the Union was consummated. It is barely twenty years since the vision of what the Republic was becoming, under the racial and social conditions imposed by the avalanche of raw

citizens, broke upon the understanding of the national leaders. Twenty years, fifty years, are but an hour in the life of a nation; yet already America is leading the world, not merely in those kinds of industrial enterprise upon which the advertising eulogist prefers to dwell, but, far more significantly, in a new conception of the civic ideal expressed in countless forms of social service and experiment full of freshness and inspiration. Nor should one omit to note that it is in the United States, naturally and inevitably, that the strongest and most extensive movement is discernible towards the making of a new framework for the international idea.

Meanwhile we in Europe see for the time being an end to internationalism as we understood it before the War. This is the most disturbing, to many people the most disheartening, fact of the war situation. International trade, finance, travel, news, and culture had gone so far, the interplay of every nation with every other had reached a stage of such great delicacy and complexity, that we failed to see how the texture could be broken or how the world could go on if it were. But now for close upon two years the life of Europe has been in suspense. The Central Empires are cut off entirely from direct trade with the countries opposed to them. They are driven in upon themselves. The traffic of ages and the wonderful enterprise organized and consolidated during half a century of imperial power are alike brought to a standstill. More than this: the most wonderful system ever created by man of international exchange in knowledge and ideas, thought and experience, has been temporarily destroyed. Here, indeed, is the crowning tragedy. It was not a pacifist dream, but rather a deduction from general experience, the belief that the world could not endure the smashing

up of the edifice so laboriously raised by the myriad bands of workers in all the countries of the world. Yet the calamity has befallen; and to all appearance the restoration of peace and normal intercourse is as yet very far off. Not only so, but there are voices, and influential voices too, heard contending that after the struggle another and a more vicious war must be organized and maintained—a trade and cultural boycott to succeed the organized slaughter of the battlefield and the sea. Needless to say, there can be no two views among those represented by the Chapters in this volume in regard to this doctrine. It is the negation of everything for which they stand. The future of the world is for the international principle which, as we believe, is not only capable of, but implies and demands, the full acceptance of nationality and the regional consciousness.

The internationalist, we are all aware, is passing through a stage of doubt and concern; and he must be in possession of an exceptionally robust temperament if, under the heavy burden of these days, he escapes a spell of profound disillusionment. But, when all is said and faced, is there any adequate justification for such a state of mind? The experience of war drives every citizen back upon the assumptions and convictions lying behind his conduct and theory, and it forces him to tell and account for his broken hopes. Now, while it would seem to be beyond the wit of any serious man to describe the present plight of Europe as anything but an immeasurable agony and calamity, must we not insist upon the presence of many consolatory facts and forces? We have witnessed the temporary destruction of such international agencies as had been created in Europe; and yet it is manifest that international co-operation counts among the main causes of the War. Without the Triple Alliance and the Triple

Entente it could not have occurred, at all events upon the scale which it has assumed. But this consideration, it may be objected, implies that international co-operation may be in itself an evil. Certainly it may, if the co-operation is between governments for improper ends. But no one would wish to maintain that the existing alliances of Europe were created for purposes deserving of condemnation. In their avowed aims, at any rate, they were pacific and progressive; and the fact that they have issued in destruction proves, not that they were sinister, but that they were not supplemented by adequate machinery, enforced by the common will of the peoples, for the legitimate satisfaction of the constituent powers and the preservation of peace. Hence all the nations are involved in a common failure; but despite the illimitable cost, we must hold to the conviction that the failure is not irreparable. We have been, as one distinguished thinker already quoted has put it, under the dominion of "the governmental mind"; and it is plain that the conception and discussion of international relations must be redeemed from that sterilizing and undemocratic dominion. The attempts at international agreement and co-operation which were all that we were enabled to compass before the War proved of no avail, for reasons now sufficiently obvious. They were confessedly not framed to meet the supreme test. Such as they were, the rulers and diplomats responsible for them did not believe in them, did not want them, and therefore could, conveniently and without difficulty, trample upon them. The forms, safeguards, and sanctions were fictions and illusions of the law; they had not been fused in the popular mind and will; they were not organically related to the lives and business, the fundamental interests, of the people themselves. When in due time the opportunity comes for settlement, and for the rebuilding of the once-promising

edifice of international goodwill and co-operation, the great task of all thoughtful and earnest persons will be there: to make a vital reality of what before was merely assumption and machinery.

Nor should one other consideration be omitted. Before 1914 the eyes of believers in the unity of mankind were fixed upon a league of peoples and governments in which all were to be included. May it not be that, in so envisaging the end, we overlooked certain inevitable stages of incompleteness? Nations and governments can only come into organic and lasting relation with one another when the basis of mutual knowledge and sympathy has been laid. A premature alliance is worth nothing. An alliance between two or more peoples which are at different stages of development and consciousness cannot be expected to endure. Common experience, above all common suffering, is an invaluable cement. The Anglo-French alliance, for example, was a convenience and a matter of mutual gratification before the War. It is now, we may conclude, a reality with an unassailable foundation. So, too, it may be argued that but for the present community of peril and sacrifice Russia would have continued to be outside the orbit of the more liberal Western Powers.[1] The grouping of the nations after the War may not at first be such as to satisfy or even encourage the most ardent believers in an all-inclusive League of Peace; but there is every reason to hope that it will contain the promise and potency of such a league. Britain and her present allies are predestined members, and their association will be an infinitely more vital, serious, and democratic association than it has been hitherto. The United States, beyond

[1] See a notable paper on "The Atlantic Nations and Internationalism," by J. H. Wicksteed, in the *Sociological Review*, January, 1916.

all question, will not be in any real sense outside it; nor will those smaller neutrals which, in the teeth of so many provocations and discouragements, have maintained their position of detachment. Is such a prospect indicative of a Europe divided for generations to come into two hostile groups, ceaselessly watching and preparing for a renewal of strife and slaughter? Surely not; but rather a stage towards the completion of that League of Peace into which all the nations of the world must one day be gathered.

It is of international relations, necessarily, that all the world is thinking now. But until the fateful year, whenever we considered or discussed the growing unity of man, the mind turned rather upon the evidence furnished by advancing conceptions of religion and ethics. We were beginning to reap the fruits of two centuries of free inquiry and impassioned search. If at times we were troubled by the slowness of the movement and the seemingly recovered power of institutions out of harmony with the modern consciousness, a brief enumeration of the main positions gained was more than sufficient to restore the spirit of confidence. The past is for ever living; but we know that beliefs and forms which have been transcended by experience are doomed to melt away. Powerful persons, interests, and communities may continue to identify themselves with outworn systems and ceremonies; and it seems undeniable that a state of war has the effect of stimulating such into more or less emphatic reassertion. But these reactions are neither deep nor permanent. Indeed, it may without question be said that the very revival of superstition and the manufacture of new creeds are evidence of profound dissatisfaction with the established orthodoxies, and of the determination of the human spirit to find a satisfying means of expression for the craving after reality.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MORAL IDEAL

BY CHARLES T. GORHAM

(Author of "Christianity and Civilization," etc.)

MILLIONS of people have no reverence for a moral ideal, no desire to realize it, no perception that such an ideal exists. Others do not see how it can be a reality unless embodied in a single commanding personality, or how the widely differing ideals of many individuals can be so combined as to form a common object of aspiration. There is no doubt a certain vagueness about the term "moral ideal"; but the vagueness does not seriously diminish its value. It connotes the service of the good—first the good of the individual, and then the good of the community. In using the expression we summarize the best elements of moral knowledge. We spontaneously think of ideals in relation to life. They represent a consciously desired object, and their main value lies in the facility with which they can be translated into action. One can love a beautiful personality more easily than one can love a principle; but, if we recognize the principle as a true one, we do not need the authority of the personality to apply it to conduct. The desire for goodness is the mainspring of some of the most important human activities, and when that desire exists aim and motive become correlated. The nature of the ideal determines or affects conduct, and conduct, as Matthew Arnold insisted, is three-fourths of life.

The character of the ideal depends upon experience,

knowledge, and environment. An ideal is an image or mental presentation of something we desire to see, to do, or to assist in bringing about—something which we believe to be good and conducive to happiness. The moral ideal is living, flexible, progressive. It is essentially religious because it contains the most vital spirit of religion—the desire for goodness; and it has the advantage that it is perhaps the only element of religion that can be verified by general experience. Supernatural religion concentrates upon another world of which we have no knowledge; morality centres upon this world, of which we know much. And it is an error to suppose that, unless we think of goodness as embodied in the person of a being at once human and divine, our ideal of goodness must be ineffectual. That ideal may be abstract, yet it is concrete, because it is embodied not in a single being, but in many millions of beings, each contributing, like the stones of a cathedral, to the stability of the whole fabric, or as the citizens of a country make up the State. No one mind can embrace all truth; no individual can exhibit every conceivable moral excellence. If we are met by a claim to that effect on behalf of any figure which has yet appeared in history, we may at once suspect that something is lacking. Perhaps, indeed, the value of a purely ethical ideal is enhanced rather than diminished by being of a composite nature. Absolute perfection we may despair of imitating; but in our fellow men and women we find more practicable models, whose admirable traits we may emulate without losing the generous inspiration, the warm sense of comradeship, that we gain only from aspiring but imperfect souls akin to our own. This is what is meant by saying that the moral ideal is living. It glows with heat and throbs with vigour because it is from our own life that it has sprung. But the ideal is not formed by the one alone;

it is the fruit of many minds animated by a common purpose. It is a beacon which poet and prophet, statesman, philosopher, and labourer, have lighted upon the furthest promontory of human endeavour, its light flashing out upon a waste of waters.

There is a certain flexibility in the moral ideal, since it is made up of numerous thoughts and aspirations. It is ever changing and expanding with the growing complexity of life. The general aim of achieving the good is somewhat abstract and formless. "Good" is a word that represents to one mind something different from that which it means to another. The roads to it are many, and the modes of travelling thither are not the same for all. Human life is full of variety, and moral good does not always wear the same aspect to every seeker. An ideal which would be of the highest value to civilized man would not be esteemed or even understood by a native of Dahomey. Even in civilized life great divergences of aim and method exist and retard the moral unification of society. An individual may have ideas which are truly moral, yet which may not blend easily with the ideas of other members of the same community. The moral ideal represents the sum and union of the ideals cherished by each individual. It is one of the tasks of modern sociology to make these diverse aims coalesce, to fit in the morality of the individual with the morality of the community without destroying the individuality of its members.

The moral ideal may be termed progressive, because it does not at once spring into existence, like armed Minerva from the brain of Jupiter. It is a product of growth, of long ages of social clash and effort. Ethics is the science of social conduct, and can, therefore, be evolved only in social surroundings, however narrow they may be. That morality undergoes a true evolution can

scarcely be doubted. But it is an evolution from within the heart of humanity, not a supernaturally given capacity. A little reflection confirms the conclusions of the ethnologist. Morality is not an entity, single and invariable; it is an infinitely complex series of relations, all of which are tested by experience, some being rejected and some retained. In primitive races we find usually narrow and selfish conceptions of duty, concerned not with altruistic effort or the development of personal character, but with simple obedience to the customs and taboos of the tribe. Medieval Europe exhibited for many centuries a spectacle of moral stagnation and even retrogression, due principally to lack of knowledge and slavish obedience to authority. In what are termed highly civilized epochs we still meet with a widespread indifference to moral obligation, of which war and the statistics of crime afford unpleasing examples. On the other hand, great improvements have taken place. One of the most surprising changes was effected in our own country within a comparatively short period. The noxious effects produced upon the human body and character by the excessive use of alcoholic liquors were so little perceived or heeded that gentlemen of high degree were in the habit of getting regularly and helplessly inebriated. That which a century ago was a failing so pardonable as to be almost one of the minor virtues has long been esteemed a vice of which a gentleman should be incapable.

Equally impressive and hopeful is the change that has come over that spirit of charity which has existed throughout historic times. The disposition to relieve suffering and distress is as keen as it ever was. It is, however, not now limited to almsgiving, tending to perpetuate the evil that needs to be abolished, but takes the form of organized efforts to remove the causes of

poverty by improving the conditions in which it arises. The change results from a perception that prevention is better than cure; in other words, that charity without knowledge availeth little or nothing in the removal of social ills. Experience interpreted by reason is proving a better guide to a golden future than the emotional sensibility which gives a momentary relief, and leaves the flood of distress to roll on in waves as everlasting as those of the ocean.

The aid of the practical reason in the perception and application of moral truth is thus seen to be of the highest importance. The principal elements of the ethical consciousness were analysed and the main lines of duty laid down thousands of years ago. They were formulated as clearly by Buddha and Confucius as by Jesus, or Mohammed, or Kant, or Ruskin. New moral truths are very rarely discovered. Buckle maintained, perhaps with a little over-emphasis, that moral truths remained stationary, while intellectual acquisitions are constantly being enlarged. He did not, however, pay sufficient regard to the fact that it is in the extension of known moral truths rather than in the discovery of fresh ones that ethical progress is to be discerned. In a very general sense a few simple formulas cover the whole duty of man; but the application of those formulas to particular cases often requires a soundness of judgment and a keenness of penetration which only the trained intellect can supply. A principle may be known, yet not fully understood or consistently carried into practice. That moral truths remain stationary indicates that another factor is required to give them force and impetus. That factor is reason, which, by discovering wider spheres for the operation of moral truth, expands our perception of its meaning and endows it with renewed vitality. All who are concerned for moral progress should, there-

fore, seek to improve the conditions in which moral truth may be applied, and to widen the field of its influence.

In accordance with this principle, that morality progresses by expansion of its original significance, we perceive in the growth of nations as well as of individuals a substitution of internal for external standards of right and wrong, a replacement of conformity to legal demands by faithfulness to the dictates of conscience. It is now recognized that the righteous man does right, not because he fears the punishment of the evil-doer, but because he refuses to do evil even though detection and punishment were impossible. He chooses the right, not because he hopes for reward in a future state, but because of an inward urge to deal justly by his fellow-men without fear or favour. This sense of right, which will not be deflected to the advantage of its possessor, is partly due to the "build" of the person, but perhaps is still more directly due to the reflective reason, which rapidly calculates the moral results of actions and decides between alternative courses.

The history of religion is full of the most instructive examples of this gradual shifting of the sense of obligation from mechanical obedience to free service, from authority to conscience. The medieval piety which rested its hope of salvation upon contact with mouldering relics, the muttering of paternosters, or the performance of penance, gave way to faith in a substitutionary sacrifice, the practical effect of which, though less soul-deadening because of the spiritual fervour it frequently aroused, was still injurious to morality by checking mental development and the acquisition of secular knowledge. The Evangelical theory is, in its turn, being replaced by a reasoned conviction that the merits of another being cannot take the place of that personal

effort towards righteousness which alone can energize and purify the soul.

It cannot have escaped the observer that the ethical progress of humanity has, especially since the Reformation, gone on concurrently with a marked decline of belief in supernatural agency as affecting human affairs. As every one is aware, this belief (which even in civilized countries is still far from extinct) led in medieval times to the most debasing superstitions; and organized Christianity cannot be freed from the reproach of having fostered natural credulity to a degree which became dangerous to social progress. It was not solely a pure moral sense which perceived and at length curtailed the evil. It was a moral sense sharpened and enlightened by persistent intellectual activity. Nothing but a courageous reliance on reason, however imperfectly supported by the culture of their age, could have impelled the Reformers to challenge doctrines and practices sanctioned by the highest ecclesiastical authority, although felt by them to be erroneous and soul-destroying. Their moral ideal, however, lost itself in the intricacies of dogmatic systems which became too grievous to be borne by minds that were being vivified by increasing knowledge. The fresh revolt was mainly the work of the nineteenth century, and one cannot doubt that it was due as much to the new light which resulted from the advance of Biblical criticism as to any quickening of the moral perceptions.

At the present day belief in the supernatural has lost nearly all its vigour. It exists, and doubtless animates powerfully large numbers of somewhat illogical believers. I say "somewhat illogical," because a believer who in his daily life genuinely acts in accordance with his professed faith in miracles is a very rare phenomenon. He offers up prayers the granting of which would involve a variation of natural laws; but he takes the same measures

to secure the desired benefits as he would have taken had no prayer been uttered. Miracles were, he is convinced, wrought in the past; but, though he asks for them, he does not expect them in the present, comforting himself with the soothing conviction that he is living in a different dispensation. This attitude has become so habitual with many worthy people that they take no trouble to square their belief with the facts before them, and are not even conscious of any mental duplicity.

The supernatural sanction of morals was in reality a delusion and a snare from the beginning. The very core of morality is that it must be a personal and inward process, a self-development and a self-discipline. If it can be put on and taken off like a suit of clothes, it is merely a means to gaining a transient advantage, a way of getting something for nothing; it is not morality in the truest sense. To-day this is so generally perceived that the old supernatural sanctions have virtually vanished. Our legislators may open their sittings with prayers, but few attend them. In Parliament, as in our universities and schools, prayers are a concession to respectability, a formality which may be disregarded. Even the Churches founded on supernaturalism, from the bench of bishops to the Salvation Army, practically ignore the supernatural and rely on material and natural means just like any man of the world or "wicked Agnostic." Were they unflinchingly to apply their principles, or cast them away and take to proclaiming a pure rational, ethical religion, they might hope to become, as of old, an embodied national conscience, the guardians of morality, the preachers of sincerity, the inspirers of a common duty. But the Churches of Christ seem to have made their home in Laodicea.

We are far removed indeed from the state of mind which was so common in Scotland in the seventeenth

century, when implicit belief in and dread of the supernatural lay like a nightmare upon the whole people. A pious worthy quoted by Buckle relates that he was in great distress because he heard the Devil advancing towards him behind a hedge, bellowing like a bull as he came along. Who would now even think of recognizing the voice of Satan in the roaring of a familiar domestic animal? When people habitually assert their belief in superhuman agency, yet habitually act as if they believed nothing of the kind, we may conclude that their creed is in a fair way to extinction. Supernaturalism, indeed, cannot survive in an atmosphere charged with faith in a natural order of which we may say there is no variableness or shadow of turning.

The solvent applied by scientific knowledge and scientific methods has been the chief agency in awakening thought and causing theological systems to decay. The old predisposition to see the "hand of God" in everything has, concurrently with the increase of knowledge, given way to a predisposition to leave the hand of God out of account. And the farther God has receded into the background the better has the condition of humanity become. Theology, in fact, has (speaking broadly) had a bad effect on morals. The moral ideas which have been evolved with so much effort and maintained with so many sacrifices have been blurred and perverted by representations that assume God to have committed acts of which a civilized man would be ashamed. The Biblical books have furnished sanction and precedent for the most atrocious crimes. Belief in an infallible book has in reality debased the moral currency to a degree of which only the curious reader of history is aware. Almost insensibly it has dropped out of the main avenues of thought, though it still lurks in the alleys and byways of a stolidly unprogressive belief. In his *Evolution*

of Theology Huxley has a useful passage on this subject:—

> It is my conviction that with the spread of true scientific culture, whatever may be the medium, historical, philological, philosophical, or physical, through which that culture is conveyed, and, with its necessary concomitant, a constant elevation of the standard of veracity, the end of the evolution of theology will be like its beginning—it will cease to have any relation with ethics. I suppose that, so long as the human mind exists, it will not escape its deep-seated instinct to personify its intellectual conceptions. The science of the present day is as full of this particular form of intellectual shadow-worship as is the nescience of ignorant ages. The difference is that the philosopher who is worthy of the name knows that his personified hypotheses, such as law, and force, and ether, and the like, are merely useful symbols, while the ignorant and the careless take them for adequate expressions of reality. So it may be that the majority of mankind may find the practice of morality made easier by the use of theological symbols. And unless these are converted from symbols into idols, I do not see that science has anything to say to the practice, except to give an occasional warning of its dangers. But, when such symbols are dealt with as real existences, I think the highest duty which is laid upon men of science is to show that these dogmatic idols have no greater value than the fabrications of men's hands, the stocks and the stones, which they have replaced.

The dethronement of supernatural belief has, indeed, strengthened morality by knocking away a rickety support and compelling it to walk alone. With clearer vision morality is now set free to perform its proper task. That task is to elevate the individual character, to purify social life, to promote the highest forms of well-being. This applies no less to the relations between

great communities than to the internal relations of their respective members. Recent events have brought out more strongly than ever before the urgent need for a recognized ethical standard, a common moral ideal, in the dealings of nations with one another. The moralist must contend earnestly and persistently that a clear recognition of moral obligation should have as great a binding force as any legal enactment; that the moral law which is good for two individuals is good for two communities, and that the nation which deliberately violates it is seriously retarding the progress of humanity and its own.

It will no doubt be long before civilization becomes completely moralized. No department of life has yet been adequately penetrated by ethical influences, but in each some general improvement has been effected. While the specifically supernatural factor is less powerful, moral considerations have assumed a prominence and importance formerly unknown. The question, Is it right? springs to our lips when a course of action is suggested. Morality has become the cement of social life and the very heart of religion. The conception of civic duties has been materially strengthened; instead of a penalty, work is a privilege; and allegiance to truth has become almost instinctive. The revulsion aroused by the barbarities of war is a healthy sign that the ethical leaven is at work. Even the orthodox Deity himself is arraigned from a moral dissatisfaction with his assumed operations. Who can doubt that the greater clearness of perception has been largely due to the decay of traditions which were once thought to afford the essential and only sanctions of moral conduct? Death itself loses its most formidable terrors when we realize that it is just the ending of life, not the critical moment that decides the fate of a soul for all eternity.

The moral ideal has the advantage over the theological ideal in its freedom from obscurity and metaphysical subtleties. Nothing can be simpler and clearer than the main tenet of the Ethical Societies—that the bond of union should be devotion to the good wherever and under whatever guise it may be found. Many years ago Dr. Stanton Coit maintained that an Ethical Society differs materially from a Christian Church. It imposes neither a ceremonial test nor a strain upon the faculty of belief. "Its basis is clearer and simpler; it is capable of being understood by the most ignorant man of ordinary intelligence. All men know, at least sufficiently well for a starting-point, what goodness in human character is. But the idea of a personal creator of the universe has baffled the speculative efforts of the best disciplined and most philosophic minds. In intelligibility, therefore, an Ethical Society may claim precedence over any Christian Church, and from this it follows that it is in its very nature more suited to men of average intelligence and of busy life" (*The Ethical Movement Defined*). Devotion to the good is a simpler creed than the Athanasian. Is is not incomparably more religious? To merge religion in morality is not to give up the better, but to slough off the worse, elements of religion. It is to reverence the known before the unknown, to replace dreams by realities, and symbolism by facts. The moral ideal is based on and accords with the experiences of life, and grows in grandeur with our comprehension of them.

In the light of these reflections it appears that the moral ideal—the highest knowledge of right human relations—impresses us by its simplicity, its truth, its vitality, its sublimity. No grander aim lies before humanity than the endeavour to realize it. To use a material image: it is a holy city, whose towers are tipped with the white light of truth, whose stones sparkle

in the sunlight of human love. But is it in man's power to get there? Can the ideal be realized? Why not? It would be Utopian to expect a change in the human heart. Evil passions will continue to smoulder and sometimes to burst forth in scorching jets of flame. But, in spite of the terrible strife now devastating this unfortunate world, there are grounds for lively hope of the future. Men, and nations too, feel that the heritage of the past is too valuable to be destroyed; they are beginning to see that evil does not pay; that war brings little or no benefit that could not be secured in peace; that honour, truthfulness, compassion, are treasures that none can afford to be without, that blind fury and reckless destruction degrade us below the level of humanity.

It may be useful to conclude by reproducing the principles of the Union of Ethical Societies as embodied in the Constitution of that body, for these principles accurately reflect the distinctive trend of modern thought and feeling:—

(1) In all the relations of life—personal, social, and political—the moral factor should be the supreme consideration.

(2) The love of goodness and the love of one's fellows are the true motives for right conduct; and self-reliance and co-operation are the true sources of help.

(3) Knowledge of the Right has been evolving through the experience of the human race; therefore the moral obligations generally accepted by the most civilized communities should be taken as the starting point in the advocacy of a progressive ideal of personal and social righteousness.

(4) For each individual, after due consideration of the convictions of others, the final authority as to the right or wrong of any opinion or action should be his own conscientious and reasoned judgment.

(5) The well-being of society requires such economic and other conditions as afford the largest scope for the moral development of all its members.

(6) The scientific method should be applied in studying the facts of the moral life.

(7) The moral life involves neither acceptance nor rejection of belief in any deity, personal or impersonal, or in a life after death.

To sum up, we are justified in claiming that the past generation has seen a marked progress towards a purer, a loftier conception of life—a conception which at least tends to gain universal recognition in civilized communities. After a long evolution the desire to do right has become an almost overmastering sentiment—with many of the better minds it is a passion—which leads to greater faithfulness in the performance of work and the discharge of duty. In art, in science, and in public life a love of truth for truth's sake has emerged from the selfish clash of personal interests. Struggling and feeble it may be, but why should we doubt its triumph? The moral ideal knits together, as no theology has ever done, persons, societies, communities, nations, races, in the bonds of a sympathy awakened and guided by knowledge. It is prophetic of the redemption which can and will come from human effort alone.

The main points to be emphasized are that the moral ideal can remain pure only when divorced from supernatural belief and associated with reason; that righteousness is not the product of externalized religion, but of an inward urge and effort; and that its simplicity and rationality prove its adaptation to life. It is practical because it is human. It is born of our own needs and strivings, our own passion and tears, hammered out of our own hard experience. For us this ideal represents the best of our achievement in our relations with our fellows; it assures us that self-reliant effort will result

in steady improvement. The moralist scatters among the many the fruits of the wisdom and insight of the few. And, whatever theory we hold of the will, we know that progress will go on because so much has already been achieved.

Take courage, then, O hearts that doubt and are fearful! Be strong in the right and resolute for truth! The march of Humanity shall not cease. The darkness is lifting; the storm clouds are fading in the sky; the light of day is breaking.

CHAPTER IX

THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

BY THE EDITOR

THE progress chronicled in matters of religion during the last few decades is so prodigious that it is not easy to measure its extent. Being an integral part of this generation, unconsciously whirled along from stage to stage by the silent social forces which have transformed our religious outlook, we are apt to be struck more by what has not been, rather than by what has been, accomplished.

The historian of the remote future will view our age from a different angle. He will find it inexplicable how, without any overt and sanguinary revolution, without unintermittent debates frequently reaching fever heat, or without the intervention of any reformer of transcendent genius, such gigantic progress was possible. He will discover one generation almost steeped in supernatural religion and the very next almost emancipated from it, and he will ask how this miracle came to be wrought.

Factors in Recent Religious Progress.

Lest the reader of the preceding chapters should fail to perceive the wood for the trees, we will here attempt a general survey of the religious progress of the recent past.

Our present generation has had indelibly impressed on it that *Science* tends to refer every event to natural

causes, and that this precludes the possibility of prayer to a deity being efficacious, and renders altogether unlikely supernatural interference in the affairs of humanity and in the processes of nature. The very ground has been in this way removed from under supernaturalism. Furthermore, the diverse departments of science are furnishing mankind far more effectively with the vital information it covets than the necessarily crude traditions incorporated in the religious Scriptures extant. How infantile does not the Biblical conception of the star-sown sky and the creation of living forms appear to us who live in the day of astro-physics and evolutionary doctrine! How hopelessly inferior are the health regulations of the Bible to the hygienic prescriptions of to-day, including, as the latter do, minute attention to sanitation, reasoned care of infants and the young generally, scrupulous respect for the human body, prevention and cure of disease and precautions against epidemics, and hygiene of the mind! How impotent we should be if our education, our politics, and our industry depended on a diligent study of the so-called Revelation and the knowledge to be procured by abjectly appealing to a deity! What a sea of perplexity would still be ours if we sought to order moral relations by the dim candle light of Scripture passages! The achievements of science have thus inevitably brought in their train the decline of supernaturalism. No longer, therefore, need we look upon the world as foreign to us or as a sealed book. Thanks to science, the terrors of superstition, with its haunting ghosts and demons, have relinquished their hold upon our generation, and thanks to the same cause the fatal practice of combating infectious diseases and social ills by means of prayer has virtually ceased.[1]

[1] Because of their decided unimportance, the spiritistic movements of our day possess the momentary advantage over the

The scientific spirit is also responsible for the destructive analyses relating to the reputed origin of the Biblical documents and to the historicity of their contents. The claim so common not so many years ago, that every word of the Bible is stamped with the hall-mark of truth and had a divine origin, is now dismissed as in flat contradiction with the results of the *Higher Criticism*. Henceforth the Bible will be regarded as one precious collection of social documents among many, invaluable because comprising the record of the struggles and aspirations of a people during many centuries. As such it will be honoured; but this will not prevent its being subjected to the critical scrutiny of the alert intellect and the enlightened conscience. It will take its place beside the Buddhist, Confucian, Muhammadan, and other noble, but fallible, Scriptures of the human race.

Of incalculable significance has been the evolution of *Democracy*, for democracy is determined to save itself by its own exertions, and tends, therefore, to dispense with supernatural aids. The growth of democracy, embracing successively all classes and races and both sexes, leads hence to the undermining of supernatural religions and to their transformation into cults primarily concerned in promoting the secular well-being of mankind through secular agencies. Democracy is playing havoc with many long-cherished and established convictions. It seeks the cause and cure of evils in the human order. To it, for instance, the impious suggestion, worthy of devil worshippers, that the appalling world war through which we are passing was divinely ordained and is serving divine ends, appears a dangerous as well as a revolting proposition. It insists on unearthing the

historic religions of being unassailed by science. Even so, however, their other-worldliness and occultism condemn them perforce to obscurity and impotence.

mundane causes of the war, and in subsequently taking steps to preclude its recurrence. Democracy seeks consolation in work and thought, not in idly ascribing the course of events to occult influences. It trusts to its own insight and discrimination, and is resolved to stamp out every iniquity. Similarly, democracy and the doctrine of the innate corruptness of human nature are incompatible. Democracy believes in the triumph of the right, and therefore in the infinite possibilities for good inherent in human beings. No less is the conception of a king in heaven, and the tutelage involved therein, discordant with its virile attitude. Democracy stands for self-help and co-operation as against self-depreciation and reliance on supernatural assistance which have blinded men to the fact that

> With all her tongues of life and death,
> With all her bloom and blood and breath,
> From all years dead and all things done,
> In th' ear of man the mother saith:
> "There is no God, O son,
> If thou be none."—(*Swinburne.*)

Democracy and supernaturalism can no more be made to consort than oil and water, and, since the former is in the ascendant, the latter is bound to dip below the horizon of human interest.

The progressive recognition of *Women* as full citizens and human beings involves for them equal educational, economic, professional, social, matrimonial, and civic rights and duties, and implies that men and women should conjointly and as equals devote themselves to raising humanity to a higher level. This spirit of self-reliance, and this desire to co-operate, are focussing the attention of women on salvation by human effort, and detaching them from the Churches to which they until recently passionately clung. Constituting as women do half of the adult population, they have awakened to the fact

that theirs are half the responsibilities, and that their place is in the ranks of the fighters for liberty, equality, and fraternity. The War will immeasurably fortify this conviction, for not only are women, as ever, exposed to the horrors of war at the battle front, and now in the distant rear through the war monsters of the air, but, by stepping into the economic breach, they are liberating untold legions of men for active service. Woman's emancipation from virtual serfdom to men and gods will conspicuously accelerate the sluggish pace of progress.

The almost miraculous growth of the *Humane Spirit* (as regards children in the home and the school; men and women in homes, shops, and factories; relations of capitalism and labour; provision for the poor, the disabled, and the aged; treatment of the bodily and mentally sick, and of offenders against the law; games and entertainments; manners and customs; strangers and those of different nationality and race; our dealings with domestic animals and wild life; and even our attitude towards inanimate nature) has made the once universal and blightening Western belief in hell and retribution odious to the community. It has also headed an implicit revolt, both within and without the Churches, against everything harsh and mean in the Bible; emphasizing thus the fact of the human and fallible genesis of religious beliefs and the progressive purging and refinement of human life through the agency of human thought and endeavour. The Churches have, consequently, felt constrained to stress the humaner portions of the Bible, playing the god of love against the god of hate, and have widely engaged in strictly humanitarian activities. In the department of humanitarianism the transformation has been incredibly great, for not many decades ago hell was a lurid reality to millions, and the clergy vied with one another in portraying in vivid colours the hapless state of the

sinner and heretic after death. To-day this gruesome belief appears to belong to the age of the dodo. Faith in human nature, faith in education, faith in reform, have ousted the faith in hideous menaces and childish cajolery. In this connection it is significant that the beginnings of modern humanitarianism date back to Voltaire and his eminent disciple Beccaria, and that a humanist, Mr. H. S. Salt, is, we believe, the inspirer of the vigilant and active Humanitarian Society.

The advance in *Education* has been so successfully obstructed by the Churches that here the achievements are notable for their paucity and meagreness. We have, nevertheless, reason to be abundantly grateful. The educational standard, as a whole, has been appreciably raised, more especially where it was most needed—in denominational schools. School hygiene has become an applied science, and the insanitary and comfortless schools of yore have been spirited out of existence. Respect for the child's individuality is growing. In the treatment of the young everything contradicting the humane spirit of our times is being deprecated, corporal punishment and prizes having fallen alike into disrepute among educationists, and frequently into desuetude. By common consent the supreme emphasis is placed on character formation, and the appeal to supernaturalism is being superseded by the appeal to right reason. Indirect and direct moral teaching are slowly but steadily elbowing out the crude Bible lessons. And the ideal of active citizenship is being substituted for passive submission to authority and recourse to prayer. But for the ill-advised resistance of the Churches, our youth might enter life far more satisfactorily equipped morally, intellectually, and æsthetically. This resistance is, however, happily waning, and we may hence look forward to more rapid educational progress in the near future and,

incidentally, to the complete exclusion of supernaturalism from educational theory and practice. The school is the entrance gate to the domain of culture—the agency which should convey the best of the heritage of the past to the coming generations, and its emancipation from the yoke of theology is therefore indispensable to continuous progress.

The extraordinary intensification in the *Movement of Populations*, from locality to locality and from country to country, has thrown men of all creeds together. The daily press, the universal post, and extensive travelling have placed the aspirations of the diverse sections of each community before the whole world. The commingling of thought and beliefs has also necessitated a wise tolerance and a tendency entirely to exclude the supernatural element from affairs of State and from everything public generally—*e.g.*, education, politics, the press, the platform, literature, the theatre, science, and even religious philanthropy and co-operation. To the same factor we owe the decay of narrow provincialism and the astounding development of national and international activities, as well as the new conception of humanity as tending to become an organized unity. Unspeakably distressing and mortifying as this world war is, we yet perceive that it is mainly due, on the one hand, to the development of international co-operation, and, on the other, to a deplorable lack of adequate legislative and legal provisions for effectually composing international differences. Serenely unconcerned about the problem of how to justify the ways of God to men or of men to God, we may confidently anticipate that moral determination and probing intelligence will in time discover a satisfactory and permanent solution of the deplorable international situation which confronts us. The Churches, by shifting the responsibility to God or preaching that

the War has been sent as a divine punishment, are, as is their wont, involuntarily helping to confuse instead of to clarify a grave issue.

Most remarkable of all is the growth of the tendency to enthrone the *Moral Ideal* in the supreme place and to dissociate it from supernaturalism, while interpreting the moral life as human service and as eager to co-operate with socially-minded industry, art, and science. Gradually, too, the conception is developing that not only should the moral ideal be conceived as supreme and sublime, but that man has the power as well as the sole privilege to transform this ideal into fact. Occupying thus the premier position, morality has come to be conceived more and more as the cement of social life, and the Churches, recognizing this, are accentuating the ethical note, and in this manner are on the way of broadening out into faithful guardians of the ethical spirit. Morality, from being *mere* morality, has become the very heart of religion. Yesterday, as it were, it was contemptuously styled "filthy rags"; to-day, its considered dictates are final in art, in science, in religion—everywhere. Do not many of us remember that delightful novelette entitled *Mademoiselle Ixe ?* How Mademoiselle's mistress sought to defend her against the attacks of the vicar's wife, who scented a heretic, by pleading that she was "in every way such an excellent person; so kind to the children, and so obliging and unselfish." And how the latter naïvely replied: "But what on earth has all that got to do with religion?" How like a faint echo from barbaric ages that sounds now! How difficult for us to conceive the state of mind which can regard morality, the arbiter of all things on earth and in the heavens, as *mere* morality, as filthy rags, or as unconnected with religion! Hear on this point a well-known theologian, Dr. Hastings Rashdall. "Morality," he writes, "cannot

be based upon or deduced from any metaphysical or theological proposition whatever." Indeed, "so far from Ethics being based upon or deduced from Theology, a rational Theology is largely based upon Ethics." Moreover, he contends that "we must peremptorily reject the view that the obligation of morality depends upon sanctions—*i.e.*, reward and punishment, in this life or any other." And he insists that "it is a condition of the acceptance of any religious system as the highest and truest that the moral ideal with which it presents us is in harmony with the deliverances of the developed and enlightened moral consciousness." The whirligig of time brings its revenges. Modern civilization sails under the proud flag of the supremacy of the moral ideal.[1]

Correlation of Social Forces.

Of course, none of these social forces—science, democracy, etc.—operates in isolation. They constitute rather a phalanx marching with quick and even step to dismantle an ancient stronghold of evil, and to build on its ruins the fabric of a new and higher civilization. Science is affected by democracy; democracy demands education and equal treatment for all; extended communications encourage world-wide intercourse; and ethics and the humaner spirit are, it is manifest, intimately related. Jointly they labour to create the kingdom of

[1] A curious passage in the Roman Catholic Catechism prepared for the United States quaintly illustrates the inferior regard in which natural morality is held by the Roman Catholic Church: "If from a natural feeling of pity you give alms or tend a sick person, if from a natural sense of justice you pay your debts and do not steal, if you keep sober from a natural love of temperance, you do what is not contrary to, but according to, the will of God, you perform a good work, but one that is only naturally good. We are not speaking here of such works that are only naturally good, but of no value for heaven. The good works we are speaking of are only those that lead to eternal salvation—that is to say, supernatural works."

heaven on earth, as imperatively demanded by an enlightened moral ideal and an educated democracy. Again, we are not concerned here to ascertain whether this volume enumerates all the cardinal causes determining the progress of religion, or whether the causes mentioned could not be correlated—whether, for instance, the inner meaning of democracy has not been the driving force throughout. Obviously, the higher criticism is a department of science, as the equality of the sexes and races is a part of democracy, and as the humane spirit expresses only a phase of ethics. Yet practical considerations made it patently desirable to treat each separately.

What a Modern Religion must Promote.

More important it is to observe that our analysis acquaints us with the master forces fashioning our civilization, and with what consequently a true religion is bound to promote in the first instance. That is, a religion worthy of our times must be in hearty accord with science, historical criticism, democracy, the aspirations of women, the humane spirit, education of a high type for all, free and cordial national and international intercourse and co-operation, and with the concept of the supremacy and sublimity of the moral ideal and man's power and privilege to actualize it. Supernaturalism has no niche allotted to it in the modern scheme of things. On the lips it may yet live; from the heart it is gone.

The Quintessence of Religion.

Has our inquiry, then, shown that the Churches are grounded on one stupendous hallucination, and that their existence has been and is an unrelieved calamity? Such a conclusion would be depressing and pessimistic,

indeed. Since every leading human institution meets some profound social need, it is eminently improbable that a religion which has persisted for ages should be a superfluity and an excrescence. In fact, the human origin of all religions forbids such an assumption being seriously entertained. Religions are not luxuries, and they would have perished of neglect long ago if they touched no human chord. It is for this reason that we speak in this volume of progress in religion rather than of the extirpation of religion, and that we look upon the extrusion of the supernatural ingredient from religion as leaving the essence and purport of religion unaffected.

In proportion as we become more familiar with the history of religions we discern an almost uninterrupted progress. From paralysing fears and confounding perplexity men advance in the process of time until fear gives way to confidence and perplexity yields to insight into natural relations. A view of the universe of things and of human fate we must have, for what oxygen is to life this is to action and sanity; and that the correct view will only gradually emerge is self-evident. A religious system further reflects the social conditions and ideals at the time of its introduction, as the higher criticism has indubitably shown. For such reasons each religion is for a period of inestimable value. Retrograde as it may be in relation to a certain generation, it denotes a colossal improvement on a remote past.

This value of religion is manifested in two directions more especially. A religion suggests, first, that the Universe is somehow on the side of the right, and that the good man may therefore be confident in his goodness and be assured that the victories of wrong are transitory and the vindication of justice certain. In more anarchic times than ours such a belief is not only ineffably consolatory, but is a prime necessity if men are not to lose

all hope and relapse into fierce savagery. Of no less importance, secondly, are the sacred writings of most religions. Petrifactions they are, to be sure, and formidable opponents of progress as well; but in their absence—prior to the advent of science which replaces them—men are without distinct guidance in matters of conduct, and left, therefore, to their own feeble individual imaginings and devices, frequently evolve an individual ethics almost infinitely inferior to that of the socially developed Christian or other Scriptures.

While in respect of the material Universe science has scotched superstition and vain surmises, and has therefore rendered obsolete the Christian philosophy of nature, we are not yet past the rapids as regards a scientific, and therefore collective, conception of the moral ideal and the moral life. Here a myriad conflicting voices rend the air, and it is mainly because of this chaos that so many men and women, however estranged they may be from supernaturalism, still linger within the Churches. They tarry there because they feel that they are bitterly in need of an assurance that life is worth living, and that moral effort is not a futility; and they hesitate to sever their connection with the Churches because they are confused, rather than helped, by the yearly increasing systems of conduct—some of which, like Nietzsche's, appear to preach the apotheosis of callousness and brute force. They feel that there exists something worse than absence of progress—namely, moral lawlessness, each individual doing what is right in his own eyes. They will readily forsake outworn creeds when scientifically determined beliefs have been substituted for them. The present writer vividly recollects a conversation he had with a Rationalist member of the late Khedive's suite. He asked him how he explained the rapid diffusion of Islam among the more backward peoples of Africa and

elsewhere. His reply was significant. The Koran, he said, readily appeals to men. It is at once a philosophy of the Universe, a comprehensive manual of conduct and deportment, a compendious law book, and a precious literary treasure. Possessing this, an individual and a community on a comparatively low level of civilization possess a *vade mecum*—a library incomparably more valuable than anything else at their disposal. Interpreting this aspect of religious systems so far as it applies to our own condition to-day, we should accordingly maintain that, as moral science develops, the Churches will either automatically empty themselves, or survive, perhaps as revered symbols of the ruling ideals of the past, or perhaps as incarnations of the modern spirit.

Our criticism of the Churches has, therefore, its roots in the double fact of general social and scientific progress, on the one hand, and, on the other, of an ossified religion reflecting, and seeking to conserve, an ancient social philosophy and polity. Two ideals are here in conflict: man organizing his own deliverance and a supernatural deity ordering man's life. Between the two there can be no reconciliation.

Will the Churches Adapt Themselves?

The Churches may, however, protest that they are striving to adapt themselves to the novel circumstances, and that they intend to keep abreast with social and scientific advance. We cannot, unfortunately, accept this protest at its face value. That religions are plastic to a certain extent, the history of all religions demonstrates. Yet the plasticity is limited. Genuine adaptation of the Churches would involve the complete excision of the supernatural element and the placing of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures on the same pedestal as the Scriptures of the other principal religions of

to-day. It would imply ceasing to give forced interpretations to passages in the Bible, and searching for light in all literatures rather than in one book. It would entail candidly recognizing that Jesus is but one of the saviours of mankind, and that it would be a misnomer to call the reformed religion Christianity. Such a radical change is speculatively conceivable; but in practice this would mean for many an agonizing wrench, and there would be, therefore, such frenzied antagonism to be overcome within the Churches that, long before their evolution was completed, a new Church would be flourishing which would embody, without petrifying or doing violence to it, the new thought.

As a matter of fact, the Churches can hardly be arraigned for being intransigent. When one notes how heaven and hell have almost disappeared from the theological vocabulary; how prayer is interpreted in the most extravagant fashion, and sometimes even deprecated; how passively the Churches have witnessed the onward strides of theoretical and applied science; how they have sometimes fraternized with democratic aspirations; how they have thrust into the background transcendental considerations, and occasionally even extolled the beauty and the worth of the moral ideal, one is constrained to admit that the Churches have acquitted themselves tolerably in a most embarrassing situation. This is true more particularly when we remember that the chief changes fall almost within one generation. And yet the old gulf remains, and must grow even wider so long as modern views continue to be masqueraded in the garb of obsolete and primordial beliefs. Our age demands that expression shall accord with thought. When the present writer once animadverted on the liturgy in a church which he visited, the minister replied: "I am responsible for the sermon, not for the service." Yet modern men

will not be satisfied until the service faithfully reflects the sermon, and the sermon the soundest contemporary conclusions. Moreover, while the old forms survive, considerable masses of men tend to remain fossilized, and the temptation to hanker after the old flesh-pots of an easy-going transcendental religion persists. If there is to be a modernism, let it be open and above board, dependent neither on Pope nor Bible, but on an enlightened reason and conscience.

It is not to be presumed that the modern spirit would be content with wandering about houseless and homeless for an indefinite period, or allow itself to depend on passing charity and on the favour of the inconstant winds. Given time, a master idea will erect for itself a temple worthy of the spirit which fills it.

The Ethical Movement.

What we have stated to be an inevitable consummation is, as might be expected, already a fact. Approximately forty-four years ago an American youth of twenty-one, after attending the university in Germany for three years, duly received his *summa*, the highest honour, in philosophy, at Heidelberg. His father, a well known rabbi of New York, wished his son to be his successor. Dr. Felix Adler returned from Germany, and delivered before a congregation of nearly two thousand worshippers his maiden sermon, which was most warmly received. Here was a desirable successor, such was the universal comment. All went smoothly until the sermon appeared in print, when it was discovered by some that this young aspirant to rabbiship had not alluded to the deity in his address. A shock of surprise, and partly of horror, went through the congregation. Nevertheless, Dr. Adler was formally invited by a deputation to be his father's successor, the only condition

being that he acknowledged belief in a deity. He replied that he was not an atheist, but that he preferred not to bind himself by accepting the post.

At the age of twenty-three Dr. Adler became Professor of Oriental Languages in Cornell University, and for two years he taught there. During this period a number of those who had been impressed with his non-theological sermon, and who sympathized with its ethical spirit, appealed to him at frequent intervals to found a new religious body which should be free from theological tests. Professor Adler finally consented. A programme was issued and circulated; he delivered in this connection an address in May, 1876; and the New York Society for Ethical Culture was inaugurated with a little over a hundred members. "Deed, not Creed," was the motto of the leader of the Society.

Soon Professor Adler attracted large congregations, and able men—Mr. W. M. Salter, Dr. Stanton Coit, Mr. Burns Weston, and Mr. W. Sheldon—joined the ranks of the propagandists. As a consequence Ethical Societies were established in Chicago, Philadelphia, and St. Louis. The idea of the Movement found a quick echo in England, and the London Ethical Society was started by a series of distinguished scholars, including Sir Leslie Stephen, Prof. Bernard Bosanquet, Prof. J. H. Muirhead, Dr. Sophie Bryant, and others. Then, some twenty-seven years ago, Dr. Stanton Coit came to England, where he has remained, and where he was instrumental in spreading the Movement. In 1895 the English ethical organizations founded the Union of Ethical Societies,[1] which has ever since been the centre of the English Movement's activities. Soon, too, the German Ethical Society came into being. This is a

[1] Address: 19 Buckingham Street, London, W.C.

Society which has also counted among its leaders many men of distinction, its President being Dr. Wilhelm Foerster, Professor of Astronomy at Berlin University, and, until his retirement from the post, Director of the Berlin Observatory. The Movement spread to Austria, Switzerland, Italy, France, Japan, and the Colonies; and periodicals in English, French, German, Italian, and Japanese have disseminated the new views. There exists also an International Ethical Union, binding together the various national groups. This Union, whose first secretary was Dr. Fr. W. Foerster, the well-known moral pedagogue, son of Prof. W. Foerster, has been responsible for initiating the First International Moral Education Congress (1908) and the First Universal Races Congress (1911), at each of which over twenty Governments and all religious sections were represented.

The influence of the Movement has been immensely greater than one could infer by totalling up the number of members. Hosts of men and women have read the pamphlets, periodicals, and books issued, or have attended at Ethical Society meetings; and the impression left has been generally a powerful and lasting one. These persons felt, whether they were clearly conscious of it or not, that here were societies which embodied in great purity the modern humanist spirit. They felt that the insistence on an ethical test in every department of life was an awe-inspiring doctrine. Thus Churches, social reformers, philosophers, the press, and the public have been appreciably modified by contact, however passing, with the Ethical Movement. Moreover, its labours in the field of moral education—it established the Moral Education League—and in many other directions, entitle it to be regarded as a first-class social force in this and other countries.

What does the Ethical Movement teach? We cannot

refer to any work which furnishes a comprehensive and philosophical exposition of the views of the Movement. Only an indirect reply is, therefore, possible. The ethical test is applied to every relation of life, and that test is regarded as supreme over all other tests. For example, the general aim of the International Union is "to assert the supreme importance of the ethical factor in all the relations of life—personal, social, national, and international—apart from all theological and metaphysical considerations." No belief in a deity, no dogma, no authority, is, therefore, held superior to living the ethical life. The supremacy of ethics is the first doctrine taught. But the supremacy of what kind of ethics? An ethics which appeals for inspiration, help, and justice to deities and spirits? An ethics which invites the individual to develop all his powers regardless of social consequences? An ethics which lays the stress on good intentions (with which the way to the nether regions is paved), or on virtue (which, like piety, may assume countless masks)? No, the ethics preached from ethical platforms is definitely non-theological, social, democratic, co-operative, civic; and almost everywhere, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, ethics is held to be, or treated as, a religion. Thus in various Ethical Societies the leaders "act as ministers of religion, consecrating marriages, officiating at funerals, consoling the suffering, advising the troubled and confused, dedicating childhood to the higher ends of life in dedication services, teaching and supervising the training of the young in Sunday schools and in clubs and classes for young men and women, and seeking to create and maintain an atmosphere of reverent attention to the sacredness of the obligation imposed by man's moral nature to follow without swerving the dictates of duty according to the best light that is in him."

A Remarkable Manifesto.

The general attitude of the Ethical Movement towards the moral and social issues of our time has found no more concise and comprehensive expression than in the following Manifesto of the delegates at the First Congress of the International Ethical Union in Zurich, September, 1896:—

I. (*a*) The object of Ethical Societies is pre-eminently the moral advancement of their members. A better moral life is not so much a gift which we would fain give to others as a good which we must strive after for ourselves with unremitting effort.

(*b*) The chief means to this end are (1) the closer fellowship into which we enter in our Ethical Societies with others who are striving towards the same goal; (2) the moral training and instruction of the young, on the basis of an Ethics which in its principles is independent of all theological doctrines; (3) opportunities for self-culture and discipline.

II. (*a*) Ethical Societies should declare their attitude towards the great social problems of the time, in the solution of which the highest significance belongs to moral forces.

We recognize, accordingly, that the effort of the masses of the people to attain a human standard of existence contains in it a moral aim of the first rank; and we declare ourselves bound to support this effort to the utmost. But we believe that there is here a question, not only as to the needs of the poorer classes of the people, but in an equal degree as to the moral poverty among the members of the well-to-do classes, who are directly threatened in their moral being by the untoward conditions of our modern economic life.

(*b*) We acknowledge that resistance against injustice and oppression is a sacred duty, and that under the existing circumstances the struggle for rights is an indispensable means in clearing up conceptions of justice and in the attainment of better conditions; but we demand that the struggle be kept within the limits prescribed by humanity, and that it be conducted in the interest of the community as a whole, and with continual reference to ultimate social peace.

(*c*) We maintain that in the solution of the so-called labour problem the question is one, not only of the material necessities

of the labourers, but of their social and legal status, and of their full participation in the highest results of civilization science, and art.

(*d*) We recognize it as a task of the Ethical Union to assist in such intellectual equipment of the people as will serve the cause of social progress; for example, to encourage scientific efforts which aim at examining the conflicting theories of Individualism and Socialism, with a view to the possibility of their being harmonized in some profounder view of life; further, to establish inquiries and institute research in moral statistics, which, based on well-authenticated facts, shall bring impressively before the eye the need of reforms in our social conditions, and to help in the dissemination of the results so obtained, in order to bring the public conscience to bear as a force making for social justice and higher development.

(*e*) We leave it to the various Societies to apply the above tasks according to the circumstances of their own countries, and we call upon all the individual members of our Societies, by simplicity in their manner of life and by active sympathy, to advance the forward social movement.

III. We regard the institution of pure monogamic marriage as a priceless good of humanity, which is indispensable for the moral development of the individual and for the permanent duration of moral civilization; but we insist that this institution should stamp itself upon sentiment and conduct with a thoroughness which as yet is absent in wide-reaching circles of society.

IV. (*a*) We demand for woman the possibility of the fullest development of her mental and moral personality, and we would strive to bring about in all departments of life an uncurtailed expression of the equal worth of her personality with man's.

(*b*) Especially we regard the fate of working women in industry (whether in the factory or at home), and also in personal domestic service, as one of the most grievous evils of our time, and would strive to restore throughout the whole people conditions of a healthy family life.

V. We hold it to be a fundamental task of our age to give again to education its unity, which in great part has been lost, and, by establishing a universal ethical end in all education, to confer that kind of service which denominational religion once rendered to education in elementary and secondary schools.

VI. We heartily approve efforts to establish universal peace among nations, and we would direct our share in these efforts towards overcoming militarism in public sentiment, towards checking the power which it exercises upon the imagination (especially of the young), and towards bringing out in some nobler way those morally significant elements which the life of the soldier contains ; further, towards opposing national egoism and national passion, which are at least to-day as dangerous enemies to peace as are the prejudices and personal interests of rulers; and finally towards bringing about a reign of conscience and calm reason in times of excitement, and when partisan spirit fosters a blind hatred of enemies.

VII. We call upon our Ethical Societies not only to direct their efforts towards the spread of the Ethical Movement, but to devote their highest energy to the formation of a new ideal of life, which shall harmonize with the requirements of clarified thinking, feeling, and willing ; and we issue this call in the conviction that such an ideal, after which humanity thirsts, will ultimately serve all classes of society and all nations.

The Ethical Movement as Progressive.

As yet the most fundamental principles of the youthful Ethical Movement are naturally still in formation. From consciously recognizing the supremacy of the atheological moral ideal, it is coming to insist that this ideal is not only supreme but matchlessly sublime, as Kant had already proclaimed in an immortal passage. It is, moreover, gradually consolidating its teaching by explicitly asserting, what it has always implicitly taught—*i.e.*, that mankind has the power to realize the moral ideal, and that this ideal is only actualized so far as human effort is put forth. In this way, by the deliberate acknowledgment that mankind is able through its own exertions to establish well-being, goodness, truth, and beauty in the world, supernaturalism is tacitly ruled out.

Even so, however, the modern doctrine of the supremacy of the moral ideal requires further development if men are to obtain that definite assurance and receive that

general guidance which, as we have seen, is the quintessence of all religions. As a Report of a Special Committee of the English Union of Ethical Societies has stated:—"There seems urgent need to develop our principles in the direction of showing that since man is adapted by nature for being primarily guided by culture, and that since culture aims necessarily at the highest in every department, and has been continuously growing from primitive times, therefore the individual is fitted for all that is noblest and best, and the future is bound to see a universal fellowship where justice and love rule unchallenged." And the Committee appended to this exhilarating pronouncement the following remark:—"It need scarcely be pointed out that this view not only harmonizes with our fundamental tenet of the supremacy and sublimity of the moral ideal and man's power and privilege to realize it, but that it is nothing more than a reasoned comment and application of this tenet." The Ethical Movement, progressive in nature and sensitive to modern tendencies, has been therefore contemplating an elaboration of its basic belief.

Numerous scientific writers have of recent years explicitly or implicitly championed the above standpoint. While other animate beings live a solitary life, or pass their existence wholly or partly in families or communities, human beings alone are, through the medium of cultural contact, connected with their whole kind in space and time. (*E.g.*, the larger Powers, through their representatives, and the press, through its agencies, are in touch with every people on the globe; and our deep cultural indebtedness to the past, to and through ancient Greece, Rome, and Palestine, is universally acknowledged.) It is on account of this unique fact of man's dependence for completest living on the co-operation of the whole human race that, in time, the number of

material and other inventions and discoveries necessarily tends to approach infinity; that progress is necessarily incessant in the human race, and involves—allowing for a similar rate of advance in the future—the gradual but certain fruition of men's highest aspirations; that man slowly advances from herd co-operation to an organized co-operating humanity; and that man is almost infinitely the superior of any animal whatsoever.

Circumstantially comparing paleolithic times with ours, and reasoning from our time to the remote future, the conclusion we have arrived at becomes irresistible and incontrovertible. It is this same fact also which underlies the doctrines and dreams of democracy—namely, that every individual is by nature fitted for the highest degree of fellowship, refinement, and reflection, and that mankind is bound in the course of time to realize men's most daring ideals.[1] It is this principle, too, which solves our most pressing social problems in the spirit of ethical and democratic idealism—by teaching the high and equal possibilities of individuals, sexes, castes, classes, nations, and races, and the momentous importance of the social organism, of equal treatment and opportunities, of education, of science, of individual effort, of co-operation, of social institutions, of equal respect for past, present, and future, of a sense of oneness with humanity, and of loyalty to the moral ideal. And, finally, this conception reconciles the old religions with the new, in that the latter, like the former, accentuate the individual's utter

[1] The current criticism of this view is out of harmony with the many democratic movements, and inconsistent with the facts of man's distinctive nature. It postulates that man is just one animal among many; it overlooks the momentous cultural factor; and it freely assumes hereditary influence where education and environment are the causes. An examination of this line of criticism will be found in the present writer's "Darwinism and Sociology" in the *Sociological Review*, July, 1914.

helplessness when completely thrown back on himself, and his dependence for salvation or perfection on a power (humanity) virtually infinitely greater than himself. Thus man's fundamental religious needs may be gratified to-day without flouting acknowledged facts, since what they demand is the inspiriting conception of life and the wholesome guidance in conduct which science supplies.

Conclusion.

To the supernaturalism and authoritarianism of the Churches the Ethical Movement opposes the ethicalism and rationalism which are unequivocally demanded by our era. Further, there are promises of a deepening of the meaning of ethics and democracy until an elevating and true conception of human nature peremptorily dispels all futile pessimisms and facile optimisms of a transcendental or natural order. By all the signs and tokens, then, of our epoch and of the ages, the religion of the future is mirrored best and in the greatest purity in the progressive Ethical Movement, and it is to be hoped, therefore, that its membership may quickly leap to millions and its beneficent influence be soon felt among all classes and in all lands.

EPILOGUE

"*The bond of religious union should be solely devotion to the good in the world. By 'the good' is meant simply a certain quality of human character and conduct—the quality which we have in mind when we say that a judge is good, because he is impartial; that a father is good, because he looks out for the lasting welfare of his children; that a citizen is good, because he is willing to sacrifice personal gain to the prosperity of the whole people. The desire to spread more and more this quality of conduct and character, and to root out badness from human life, is, we affirm, the true bond of religious union among men.*

"*Each man should bestow the highest reverence of his heart, the feeling of absolute sacredness and inviolability, upon the doing of every individual duty as it presents itself to him. In the sense of supreme worth and dignity, each duty is to be done; and, so far as the feeling of inviolability has been an element in religion, we affirm that the doing of duty is religion; with us every attack upon iniquity is a religious crusade. Every individual social reform which we take up becomes to us in sacredness a religious task. For us goodness must exist in human hearts and institutions; and*

to bring it into existence is the highest that we know. We preach that right conduct is of supreme importance—more important than doctrine or ritual; aye, more important than the worship of a personal God, or of Christ in the heart. We believe that right conduct is the way, and the only way, of a joyful, peaceful, inspiring life. We believe that it is the way to attain a life of perfect selflessness, which has no anxiety about the future either before or after death, which is willing to become annihilated at death, if such be the lot in store for us. Devotion to right conduct is, we believe, the way, and the only way, from the haunting presence of our own past transgressions. Complete devotion to the right is the only act of atonement by which we can become reconciled with our past selves. Thus, right conduct, because it is the way of life to the individual and of gladness to society, is of supreme importance; every other attempt at self-reconciliation, or to attain strength and self-confidence, is folly and evil. What food is to the hungry man, what water is to the parched lips, what the sun in spring-time is to the trees and flowers, such is right conduct to the inner spiritual life of man. We preach this devotion to the good not only as the bond of fellowship, but as the way of inward peace and life.

"Yet preaching is not our chief means of furthering the spread of goodness throughout society. We shall also attempt, so far as lies in our power, to change the physical and social environment of men, so that it shall be more favourable to a truly human

life. The highest and most potent change we can effect is to provide people with fellowship in the moral life by establishing Ethical Societies. But this change of spiritual environment must be followed forthwith by physical, economic, and intellectual reforms, which only the whole community can effect. We recognize that work for mankind of every sort is the most eloquent preaching. There is no way to convince people that one believes in brotherhood like proving one's self a brother."

DR. STANTON COIT,
in "The Ethical Movement Explained."

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